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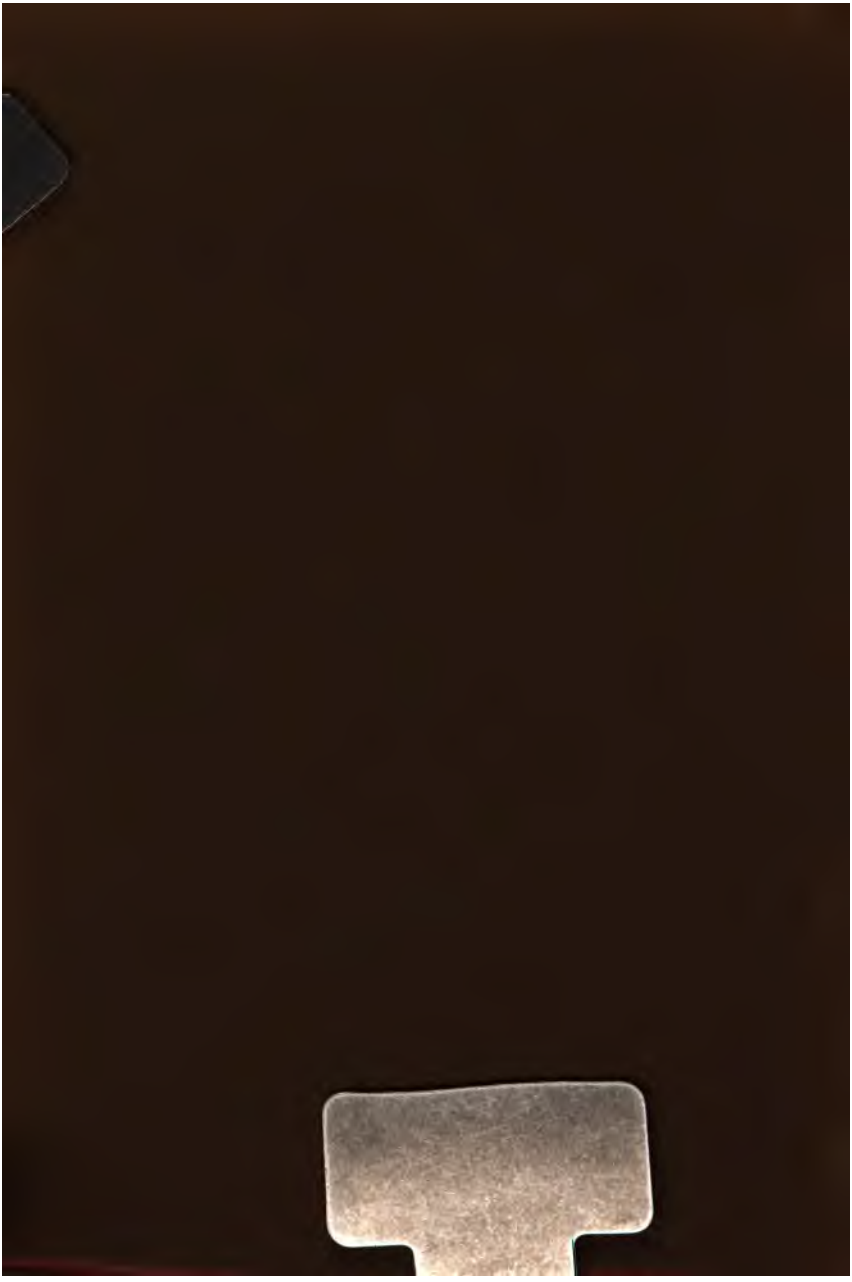

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

LECTURES ON 1 CORINTHIANS II.

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BY

ADOLPH SAPHIR,

AUTHOR OF "LECTURES ON THE LORD'S PRAYER,"
"CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES," ETC.

"*Amor meus crucifixus*"

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PREFACE.

THE following Lectures (with the exception of the last) were not written, either for delivery or publication, but spoken and taken down by a shorthand writer. The state of my health having precluded me for more than two years from the labour of composition, this mode, unsatisfactory in many respects, was the only way in which I could respond to the desire, expressed by many friends, to publish these sermons. I have only been able to make a few corrections and additions, and I venture to hope that the reader will kindly excuse the want of accuracy and finish of style, of which I am very vividly conscious. Resuming the ministry in a new locality, after a somewhat protracted interruption of work, I felt anxious to express convictions, which during an enforced pause of ministerial labour and a season of deep trial, were impressed on me with peculiar strength and vividness. In the teaching and tone of the second chapter of the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, I found a perfect expression of the truths and feelings, into which,

to some slight extent, I had been brought. I endeavoured to lay before my hearers, mostly unknown to me, and not yet forming a congregation, a statement of the circle of truths which appear to me most important; and this may account, to some extent, for the rapid, declarative and sketchy character of these Lectures. The presence and blessing of the Lord was felt during the meetings when they were delivered; and my sole reason for publishing them is the hope that it may please the gracious Master to make this little book, containing a feeble but deeply-felt testimony, helpful to some seekers and disciples.

Among the few quotations which I have added, are some from the late Dr. John Duncan, which I transcribed with feelings of special gratitude and affection. They recalled to me years of my childhood, when that eminent servant of God bestowed much loving care in teaching me. It is just thirty years since, by the unspeakable mercy of God, I was brought to the knowledge of the great mystery of godliness, the Incarnation of the Son of God and His salvation, and was baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. To testify of that holy and blessed Name, of the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, was the object of

these Lectures, and with their many faults and deficiencies, I commend them to Him, who condescends to bless things that are weak and small.

May we daily know, love and follow Christ crucified. To bring all things to Him is our peace; to bring Him into all things our great task. To trust in Christ crucified, and to be made conformable unto His death, is the whole of Christianity. Undisturbed by the noise and strife of the world, and by the ever-changing opinions and fashions of human thought and culture, let us dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty. And while we hold the mystery of "Christ for us," as the secret and dearest treasure of our soul, may we in our character and conversation show the death of the Lord; may all around us see in us some resemblance to Him who was meek and lowly in heart, who came to humble Himself, to serve and to lay down His life. "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh. Go ye forth to meet Him!"

A. S.

Trinity Presbyterian Church,
Notting Hill, *April 6th*, 1873.

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"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—1 Cor. ii. 1-5.

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1. And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.
2. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.
3. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.
4. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:
5. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.
6. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:
7. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:
8. Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
9. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him
10. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.
11. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.
12. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.
13. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
14. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
15. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.
16. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

LECTURE I.

THE CENTRE OF THE GOSPEL.

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."—1 Cor. ii. 2.

The important topics, which the Apostle Paul brings before us in this chapter, are these four:—

Firstly—The simplicity of the Gospel: Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ crucified is the centre, as well as the sum and substance of all Christian knowledge, preaching and experience.

Secondly—The comprehensiveness and depth of the Gospel: Jesus Christ crucified is the wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.

Thirdly—Jesus Christ crucified cannot be known by the natural man, but is revealed by the Spirit of God. The Holy Ghost reveals unto us the things which are freely given us of God, which God hath prepared for them that love Him, and which have come to us in Christ crucified.

Fourthly—As the Spirit alone can reveal the salvation of God, so the preaching of the Gospel must

not be with the enticing words which human wisdom teacheth, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

I.—Jesus Christ crucified is the centre, as well as the sum and substance of all our knowledge, preaching and experience.

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified;" such has been the language of every God-sent preacher. The Lord Himself commenced the ministry of reconciliation. God was the first preacher of the glad tidings of salvation. The voice of the Lord interrupted the silence, ushered in by man's consciousness of guilt and fear of death. In the first announcement of the great Deliverer, He connected the triumph of the Messiah with His great and overwhelming sufferings. And as in that first gospel, (the Protevangelion,*) Jehovah Himself

* The Protevangelion; the first promise is justly so called, because it contains the Gospel in germ. Scripture, or rather the Revelation, of which it is a record, is an organic growth; not an aggregate of successive teaching, added in a mechanical way, but a development of "living seed." Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world; especially His central work of Redemption. Hence every part of God's revelation is complete, containing the seed. And when, in the light of subsequent fuller revelations, the Church sees in old prophecies more than meets the eye, or more than could have been clearly apprehended by the generation, to whom that word was sent, this must not be stigmatised as arbitrary and unhistorical, but is truly spiritual, *i.e.*, according to the mind of the Holy Spirit. The Word recorded in Genesis iii. 15, is God's Word. It was no doubt full of light and comfort to the first generations of man, as it was subsequently echoed with ever-

preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified, so Moses and the Prophets taught the same salvation. The Law was given by Moses to convince of sin, and to call forth the feeling of the need of a Saviour; the Prophets declare, in the name of God, that redemption would come to the poor in spirit. Moses, by the Law, convinced Israel that they were guilty, and had no righteousness for God. Moses, by the Gospel which he preached through the types, and the Prophets, who were afterwards sent by God to the nation,

increasing distinctness and fulness, by the Prophets. And so far from our having fully comprehended it, only the end will explain the beginning; only the Millennial age will disclose Genesis. When Satan is finally bruised under our feet we shall understand the Protevangelion. How important the first promise was in the first ages of our race is evident from the fact, that the struggle of the woman's seed with the Serpent is a symbol which appears in the mythic traditions of nearly all nations; the proofs of which are the gods, giants, and heroes of the primeval age, who are praised as the conquerors of the Serpent, or Dragon, or Evil Power, and are regarded as the sons of a pure and deified woman. According to the myths of the Persians, Ahriman foresees that he is to be bruised by the descendant of Zoroaster, the Sosiosch, or Messiah, at whose coming a peculiar constellation is to appear. In the Indian mythology, the first man of the present æon predicts to Aditi, a woman in purity and virtue, that Vishnu would be her son. Similar traditions are among the old Germans, Thor conquering the Evil Serpent, Mitgard and Vidar, who is to appear at the end of the world and bruise the head of the Evil Demon. In most of these myths the promise of this great human, and yet more than human, conqueror is addressed to the first woman; while he himself is spoken of as son of a god. We can discover in these confused and error-mixed traditions traces of that Divine promise which, for centuries, was the centre of light and hope to the children of Adam.

brought this consolation unto all sin-convinced and broken hearts; that while man had no righteousness for God, God, in His mercy, had righteousness for man. "A suffering Saviour" is the testimony of Scripture. When, in the fulness of time, John the Baptist came, in whom Moses and the Prophets were summed up, in whom the law and promises were recapitulated; who preached repentance, because he announced the dawn of the Kingdom; what else was his testimony but this:—"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" In the preaching of this great Forerunner of our Lord, is given unto us a brief epitome of all the Divine teaching which Israel enjoyed during the preceding centuries, ushered in by the voice of the Eternal Himself, ere He banished our parents from Paradise, and continued from the commencement of the world, by His holy Prophets and messengers. It is comprised in the words of the Apostle: Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

And since the death and resurrection of our Lord, and the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, there has begun a new era of ministry. Now, especially, with a clearness and fulness, an intensity and concentration of light, and love and energy, such as could not be known in the preparatory dispensation, Christ crucified is to be preached. God has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Our message is this:—"God was, in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses; for He hath made Him, who

knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God." The Gospel testimony is summed up in that beautiful narrative, which we read in the Acts of the Apostles,—man is journeying through the wilderness of life; the Evangelist meets him, and from the Scripture, which records the death and exaltation of Messiah, preaches unto him Jesus. "I determined not to know anything, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

But while this is true of all God-sent preachers, there are peculiarities in the life and character of the Apostle Paul, which invest his testimony with special interest and instructiveness.

1. The teaching of this Apostle is characterised by wonderful grasp of thought and comprehensiveness. He declares "the whole counsel of God." His knowledge in the mystery of Christ is exceeding great and deep. Wisdom was evidently the special charisma, or gift of grace, which was bestowed upon this chosen vessel of the Lord. The Apostle of the Circumcision, Peter, is struck with this pre-eminence, and speaks of the wisdom which was given "unto our beloved brother Paul;" and alludes to the profound character of his teaching. Think of his Epistle to the Romans. What a wonderful steep ascent have we here from the lowest depth of ruin to the loftiest and sunniest height of grace and glory! He commences with the guilty, lost, and helpless condition of man, both Jew and Gentile; he then testifies of the righteousness of God, which is by faith, and of peace through the Atonement, the

substitution of Jesus Christ. He still lifts us higher, by teaching us how we have died in Christ unto sin and the law, and, being planted into Him as the second Adam, have received a new life of holiness and strength, until at last we reach that high table-land, where, looking back on the past, we can say: "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus;" and, looking forward to the future, we can triumph: "Who shall separate us from the love of God?" In this wonderful Epistle we have set forth, out of the depths of his own experience, the nature of sin, the nature of guilt, the power of the law, the justification of the sinner by faith, the doctrine of the first Adam and of the second Adam, the position and the life of the believer. Or, again, look at the Epistle to the Ephesians, altogether different in its tone and standpoint. The Apostle does not accompany here the awakened sinner from the City of Destruction up the steep ascent to peace and joy in believing; but lifted up, as it were, on eagle's wings, the believer is in the Holy of Holies, and, seated with Christ in the heavenlies, he looks down with adoring gratitude and joy on the manifestations of Divine grace. He can discern from his elevated position the love which chose us in Christ before the foundations of the world were laid, and the glory which awaits us in the purchased inheritance. He sees the believer, quickened with Christ and seated with Him, accepted in the Beloved, enriched with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, united inseparably with Jesus

Christ, the Son of God, the Heavenly Bridegroom. Or, recall the Epistles to the Colossians and to the Hebrews, in which the Apostle dwells more on the glory of Christ. Christ is all and in all; He is high above angels and principalities. As He is the centre of creation, so God hath summed up all things in Him. Higher than angels, greater than Moses and Joshua, above Aaron, above all Prophets and previous manifestations of God is He, "who is the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person." Or, again, if you look at the Epistles to the Corinthians, to Timothy, and Titus, what teacher in the Church of Christ possessed such knowledge of human life, of the character of the world, of congregational difficulties, sins and failings, who enters so comprehensively, so minutely, into all the ramifications of life, into all the applications of the Gospel, into Christian Ethic? Or, if you refer to his Epistles to the Thessalonians, you see how the doctrine of the future, how prophecy, formed an integral part of his teaching. He speaks of the mystery of iniquity, which was already beginning, but which, after its full development, shall be destroyed by the brightness of the Lord's coming. Such are only very hasty sketches of the extensive territory of truth through which the great teacher of the Gentiles leads us as a skilful and experienced guide.

But not merely does he possess such wonderful knowledge, but he is most anxious to impress upon all Christians, that they should not rest satisfied in

the knowledge of the elements of truth, but that they must go on to perfection; his earnest and constant prayer for them is, that God may give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints; he prays that they may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth and depth, and length and height. He is desirous that they should not be ignorant of the mystery of Israel, and the mystery of the second coming of the Lord, and the mystery of the Church. It is therefore peculiarly significant that *this* Apostle says:—"I am determined not to know anything, but Christ Jesus and Him crucified."

What is his meaning? Evidently that "to know Jesus Christ and Him crucified" is not the minimum of knowledge but the maximum of knowledge; that "to know Christ Jesus and Him crucified" is not to know little but to know all; that here is not a descent from a loftier region, but an elevation into the highest sanctuary; that "in Jesus Christ and Him crucified" all doctrines, all God's teachings, and man's experiences culminate; and from "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" all duties, all works, all ministries are to emanate and to be evolved. Here is the hidden, the perfect wisdom of God. No doctrine is seen clearly and truly unless it leads to the cross; no work is God-pleasing, no experience or attainment genuine and vital, unless it has its source, root and

strength in the cross; no waiting for the second Advent is healthy and purifying unless it is called forth by the contemplation of the great God and Saviour, who gave Himself for us, and redeemed us from all iniquity. O blessed concentration! Blessed simplicity of the Gospel! From this centre, from this cross of Christ Jesus, as from the heart, are the issues of life. He who longs after wisdom, deep and broad, profound and comprehensive, lofty and real, heavenly and entering into the earthly life, let him learn from the Apostle Paul, that to know Jesus Christ and Him crucified is Alpha and Omega, that here are hid all treasures of wisdom, and knowledge, and spiritual understanding. Here, as in the heart, is the vital principle, on which the Christian and the Church live; without the atoning sacrifice, Christians and Christianity do not exist. Here, as in the heart, is the principle of motion and heat; no other fervour or activity is pleasing to God, and useful on earth, but that which proceeds from beholding the Lamb that was slain.*

2. But notice a second peculiarity in the Apostle. He was not among the twelve disciples who knew the Saviour in His humility. He never saw Jesus

* "Christ crucified is the centre of Christology." "That which has become the by-word of all Unchristians must be the very core of Christianity."—(The late Dr. Duncan, in Rev. M. Stuart's *Reminiscences*.) It is the glory of the Church to preach Christ crucified, and not to regard the reproach of the world, which at all times, in different forms, has been directed against this sacred doctrine of the atoning sacrifice; especially against the doctrine so frequently and emphatically taught in Scripture:

in the attractive and sweet ministry of His earthly life. He never beheld His lovely humanity, full of gentleness and grace. He did not see Him on the lake of Galilee, walking so meekly and calmly, that John exclaimed:—"Behold the Lamb!" He did not see Him, touched with the infirmities and sorrows of men, healing the sick, and feeding the multitude with unwearied love and overflowing kindness. He never saw Him standing at the grave of Lazarus, and how His eyes filled with tears. He did not behold Him weeping over impenitent Jerusalem. He never was witness of those thousand manifestations of love, divine in its depth, human in its tenderness. He did not witness the agony in Gethsemane, nor did he stand at the foot of the cross. The first time Saul of Tarsus beheld the Saviour, he saw Him, not as the meek and lowly Jesus in the humanity of weakness, but as the Lord of glory and of power. It was as El gibbor, the strong and mighty God, that Jesus was manifested to him with a splendour, before which even the sun in its midday height became pale, and with a voice from Heaven —the voice full of majesty and power, the voice that breaketh the cedars and shaketh the wilderness. And yet the deepest impression left on the heart

that in the sacrifice of Christ His Blood is of central importance. Let us, however, speak of this most solemn and sacred mystery with awe and reverence, remembering that it is rather a subject of adoration and faith than of reasoning and argument; a sanctuary open indeed to the meek and sorrowful, to the earnest and contrite, but always to be approached with solemnity and godly fear.

of Saul was the sweet name Jesus; the indelible image burnt into his soul was Jesus Christ crucified. "I am Jesus;" Saviour; He identifies Himself with His suffering, persecuted disciples; He saves sinful men who put their trust in Him, who died for the unjust. Oh! what a wonderful fulfilment of the Saviour's words:—"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto myself." We would naturally refer these words to His exaltation on the Father's throne. But the Spirit teaches us: "This spake he signifying what death He should die." And thus it is, that when the glorified Lord appears unto Saul, it is not the effulgence of the uncreated Light, it is not the awful majesty and glory of His exaltation; it is His cross, it is His death, which is the irresistible magnet, which is the arrow, that wounds the heart with unspeakable power and sweetness. "Dear dying Lamb,"—thus He is seen. "I am determined?" said the Apostle, henceforth, not to know anything, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified?"

In his case, conversion and the call to the Apostleship were coincident. The same appearing of the Saviour which converted him, set him apart to be a teacher of the Gentiles. Grace and Apostleship were then given to him. This invests the testimony of the Apostle with an intensity and ardour which appeals with such winning power to our hearts. He preached Christ, he preached his experience; for Christ was his experience. When he remembered the most solemn and blessed moment of his

existence, when he thought of the first ray of Divine love which touched his heart, he remembered also the Apostleship to which he was called, by the Heavenly vision. When Paul preaches Christ and Christ crucified, he preaches out of the inmost depths of his heart.

3. The third peculiarity of the Apostle is, that more than any other disciple, he knew the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, and was made conformable unto his death. "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." This formed an important element in the high vocation with which the Lord called him. No other Apostle seems to have entered so deeply into the spirit of Christ, the spirit of the cross. In the Epistles to the Corinthians, he unfolds the secret of his life and ministry. He reveals the source of his strength and influence. And what was it? He glories not in his wisdom, his eloquence, his power; he glories in his weakness, infirmities, reproaches. His daily experience was, that he had the sentence of death in himself, and that thus he learned to trust in God, who raiseth the dead. His hidden life was that life, which is born of death; he was always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in his body, his walk and work. The preparation, which the Apostle Paul had to fit him for his marvellous activity, was not a preparation of strength, but of weakness. Blessed infirmities, which compel him to seek his only refuge in the mercy of God; blessed weakness,

which makes him take hold of the inexhaustible power of God; blessed crucifixion, which leads to resurrection-life and victory. He can glory in the cross of Christ; that which appears to the world an obstacle is a channel, for when he is weak he is strong. Thus did he not merely present the cross of Christ, but was himself an illustration of the "weakness of God," which is stronger than man. Identified with his message, delivering it not merely in the letter but in the Spirit, he is "determined not to know anything, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

When the Apostle says that this is to be his only knowledge, I would notice in the first place that, by this revelation, the Apostle expresses his faith in the Divinity of the Lord. Would he say of any angel—Gabriel or Michael, would he say of any created being, however glorious, holy and excellent—that to know Him was all his aim and delight? What was the promise of God throughout the whole Old Testament? They shall know *Me*. This is the great promise of the Messianic age, this the blessedness and glory treasured up for God's saints. All the Prophets, whom God sent to His ancient people spoke of this, as the wondrous manifestation of Divine love, as the source and centre of Israel's future peace and prosperity. They shall know Me. Hence, when Paul says, "he is determined not to know anything, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," he declares, that Jesus Christ crucified is

Jehovah, who alone can bless Israel. For this knowledge he counted all things but loss. All things, even those which were dearest and most valued: his being a Hebrew of the Hebrews, his knowledge of the law of God, his zeal and blameless walk in the statutes of God—all these things he counted loss, for the excellency of the knowledge—of a created being? Then he would fall into the depths of idolatry, deep below the level of any well-instructed and pious Israelite. No, when this son of Abraham, who, from his fathers, worshipped the Lord, sacrifices everything to the knowledge of Jesus; he declares the Divinity of the crucified Saviour as truly and explicitly as Thomas, when he fell at the feet of Jesus, and exclaimed:—"My Lord, and my God." So true and audible is the voice of adoration, which ascends from the words of the Apostle:—"To know nothing, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

It is a *person* whom he knows. The great difference between Israel and the Church on the one hand, and the Gentiles, who are without the knowledge of God, is chiefly this, that idolatry substitutes ideas and things for the Divine Person. The world speaks of the true, the good, the beautiful (neuter gender); an element, an abstraction. This is not Jewish, not Scriptural, not the language of revelation. The Pagans ask: *What?* The God-taught say: *Who?* "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after *God;* my soul thirsteth for God, the living God." In Judah

God is known; infinite and incomprehensible, and yet a person, whose name is I AM, whose name is manifold, revealing His justice and truth, His goodness and mercy, His faithfulness and tenderness to us-ward. High above us, yet near; greatly to be feared, yet full of pity and condescension; to whom we can speak freely, and pour out all our heart. Israel knew God, the Living One, and said: "Oh, that Thou wouldest come down!" Ideas however sublime, laws, however pure, cannot bring peace to the heart and life to the soul. Salvation can only come through a Saviour; life can only be given from the source of life, the living God. And this is the great mystery of godliness, that God himself has come down to earth; that God himself has visited His people; that the Son of God became Man. Great is the mystery of godliness, and without controversy. This is the greatest as well as the brightest and surest fact of our history. Marvellous as is this new foundation, there can be no doubt, that the omnipotent love of God has laid it. "God manifest in the flesh." Higher than this we cannot rise. Greater gift than this God could not bestow on us. The Eternal has allied himself with our finite existence; the Son of God has taken upon him the seed of Abraham; the Lord of Glory was born of the Virgin Mary. See here the depth of the fall in the grandeur of the remedy. Nothing could rescue man from destruction, nothing could elevate him out of his misery, but a new creation, a new gift from God. There was nothing within man

by which he could be raised or purified; there was no inherent power, by which he could be lifted out of the depth of guilt and death into which he had sunk. But while we behold in the marvellous redemption the depth of our fall, we behold, also, the height to which the infinite love of God raises man. The purpose of the Incarnation is not merely, to redeem us from evil, but to bring the dust of earth into the Holy of Holies, to raise us with Christ, that we may be seated with Him in the Heavenlies. For this end the Son of God became Man, that, through union with Him, ransomed and forgiven sinners should be brought above all angels and principalities, nearest and closest unto the throne of God.

But while we adore the great mystery of the Incarnation, let us remember, that the Incarnation necessarily leads to the Crucifixion. The mystery of the manger involves the mystery of the cross. It is not enough to know that unto us the Child was born, the Son was given, that the Word was made flesh. He never would have come down to earth unless His purpose had been to offer His life as a sacrifice for sin. The Church sings with gladness:—

> "O come, all ye faithful, joyfully adoring,
> To Bethlehem hasten with glad accord!"

But Bethlehem is without salvation, and brings no peace to the guilty conscience, no renewal to the dead heart, unless it leads us also to

> "Survey the wondrous cross,
> On which the Prince of Glory died."

For remember, the great purpose of the Incarnation was not merely to visit but to *redeem* mankind. The purpose of the Father was the substitution of Christ, that sinners might be saved. When the Son of God said, "Lo! I come," He referred to His Incarnation, to Bethlehem. But when he added, "To do Thy will," He looked to Calvary, to His atonement, when on the accursed tree He died the just for the unjust. He came willingly, joyfully; He was born of the Virgin Mary, in order to fulfil that will "by which we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." He was born in order to die. He came to lay down His life as a ransom. He took upon Him our nature, that He might offer Himself as a sacrifice; He became Man, to become man's substitute and righteousness.

His birth in Bethlehem, as it involved His death, is necessarily connected with His second birth or resurrection. He was born of the Virgin, in order to be afterwards the first-begotten of the dead. Christ came not to be again, as it were, a first Adam, a source of life to men apart from death. That was impossible. We were under the sentence and the power of death. The life which, by Divine grace, was to be bestowed on us, could only come through death, could only be resurrection-life. Therefore, Jesus became the second Adam, the quickening Spirit, after He had died; He remained alone, until after His death and burial He was quickened by the glory of the Father. Then He

rose the first-born among many brethren. We rejoice when Christ is born in Bethlehem, yet our own birthday is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; then "were we begotten again unto a lively hope." See, then, in the very Advent of the Lord the precursor of that second birth out of the grave, when He became the First-born, that we might become partakers of that new and endless life which, through His death, He purchased and obtained for us.

And, lastly, see the death of Christ involved in the Incarnation by considering the purpose of the Father—that Christ should be the Head of the Church, the fountain of spiritual life and joy. Christ was born, not to be, as it were, the first man, the greatest, noblest, purest member of the race, the efflorescence of humanity; He was born to be the Head, the King, the Divine Lord. And in order to be thus exalted, it became Him, first to descend into the lowest depth of death, and through this divinely-appointed suffering to enter into glory. Now the Father anointed Him with the oil of gladness, and after His Ascension He sent forth the Spirit, into the hearts of all, who are chosen to be His Church—His Body.

He was born to die. The Church has always felt this. In the Creed, with profound instinct, she hastens to the cross:—"I believe in Jesus Christ our Lord, conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," and then, leaping over the thirty-three years of His life and ministry, "suffered

under Pontius Pilate." From the commencement Jesus Christ is Jesus Christ crucified.

His name is Jesus. Who originated this name? It was planned from all eternity. Deep in the recesses of the Divine mind, deep in the counsel of omnipotent love, there lay a jewel, a gem, which was to be manifested in the fulness of time, and to be the joy and glory of eternity. It was the name Jesus. In the dispensation preceding the Advent, it was so ordered that Moses, the servant of God, died in the wilderness, and Joshua led the people into the promised land. When the angel appeared unto Mary, and announced to her the great mystery, the miracle of miracles; when, in a dream, the angel appeared unto Joseph—through angelic revelation from heaven above, out of the celestial council-chamber—the name "Jesus" was given unto the holy child; so careful was God to show us that it was not man who gave this name to our Saviour, but eternal wisdom and love.*

During His life the Lord revealed the meaning of His blessed name. His whole life was an exposition of His name. It was manifested in all the gracious

* "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds." Thus the universal Church testifies. But there is perhaps something peculiar in the experience of a modern Jew with regard to this holy and blessed name. In the present dispensation, Israel, though still by grace retaining faith in God and His revelation, is yet without true and vital knowledge of God, and worships; not an "unknown God," but One who, although known and loved by the Fathers, has receded from their vision into obscurity. Ancient Israel knew and pronounced The Name; not so moder

words which flowed from His lips, in all the miracles of love and healing with which He blessed the afflicted and needy. From the first sermon which He preached in Nazareth, from the first word of consolation which He addressed to the guilty and lost: to the royal assurance of pardon and acceptance which He gave on the cross to the repentant sinner at His side; from Bethlehem to Golgotha, from His baptism in Jordan to His agony in Gethsemane, all His words and acts declared His name Jesus. "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." And yet it is only on the cross that the name Jesus shines forth in all its beauty, power, and glory. And it was only through His death that He obtained the full right to that greatest of all names. Thus the Apostle Paul teaches us that, because the Son of God (in His Incarnation) "humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name, which is above every name, that *at the name of Jesus* every knee should bow: of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the

Israel. This is significant. As the name "Jehovah" disappears in the Synagogue, another name appears in the Church, centre of that same life of faith, love, joy, and spiritual power, which has vanished from the Jews. That name is Jesus, the same as Jehovah, only a fuller, clearer, and sweeter manifestation of the Redeemer-God. Oh, what joy, to know and to call on the *name* of the Son of God! It is an ever memorable day when, by the grace of God, an Israelite says, "Lord Jesus!"

Father." When saints and angels adore Jesus, they behold and worship the First and the Last; Him that liveth and *was dead;* the Lamb that was slain; Jesus crucified is Jesus indeed.

Without the cross there is no Christ. The Lord is called Messiah, Anointed, because He is the true, perfect, and all-sufficient Prophet, Priest, and King. In this threefold office Christ is the only mediator between God and man; in this threefold office He brings light, love, and life to our hearts. These three offices comprise His mediatorial work. They are inseparably connected one with another, and they all culminate in the Cross. The basis of His Messiahship is His Sonship. He is the Christ, because He is the Son of the living God. He is Prophet, Revealer of the Father, true and faithful Witness, because from all eternity He was in the bosom of the Father. We "hear Him," because, He is God's "beloved Son." He is the true and only High Priest, because the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin. He is the King, because He who said unto Him, "Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten Thee," appointed Him King on his holy Mount Zion and heir of all things.

But as the Sonship is the basis of His Messianic dignity and office, the foundation on which the exercise of His mediatorial work rests, the source from which it flows, is the Atonement on the cross.

In the Prophetic office, this is perhaps least obvious. We are accustomed to regard Christ as the Proph-

because He taught on earth, and is now instructing the Church through His Spirit. But Christ is the Prophet, chiefly through the cross. If He had not died as the Sin-bearer, all previous Prophets would have uttered predictions, raised expectations and hopes, which never came true, which remained shadows without substance, words without reality. That which represents the value and the essence of prophecy, is Christ on the cross; for Moses and the Prophets testify, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins," and that blessedness and glory should come by that Servant of the Lord, "who is wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; who is led as a lamb to the slaughter"—Jehovah Zidkenu. *The cross of Christ is the substantiation of all prophecy*, including his own frequent and emphatic teaching, in which He predicted and explained the great purpose of His mission.

But, again, Jesus is the perfect Prophet, because He declared fully the name of God; He revealed the Father. Jesus manifested the name of God, and at the end of His life He was able to say to His Father, "I have glorified Thee on the earth;" and to His disciples, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." But He always looked forward to His cross as the great declaration of the name of God. He, who spake as never man spake, into whose lips grace was poured, whose words were spirit and life; He, whose whole life was a continuous and perfect manifestation of Divine love and holiness, yet spoke and testified with still greater clearness, and more

exquisite sweetness and tenderness, when He suffered and died on the accursed tree. It is there, that the name of God is declared perfectly, that the glory of the Lord is revealed, that depths of Divine love and mercy, holiness and truth, wisdom and power are manifested, which angels had never known before. It is on the cross that Jesus is the Prophet. It is owing to His death also, that the Spirit, who leadeth into all truth, descends. Out of the darkness of death shines forth the true light, which brings knowledge, peace and gladness to the "Brethren" of the risen Saviour. Before The Prophet died and was glorified, His disciples saw, but understood not; they remembered not the Scripture; they did not know it, though it was fulfilled before them. Jesus became the true Prophet to them after His resurrection. It was then that the promise given by Moses, was truly fulfilled. The Spirit of Christ was in all the Prophets, and testified beforehand of His sufferings, and the glory that should follow: so that we may say, Christ is the Prophet in all Prophets. But He Himself, by His death and resurrection, is that final, all-sufficient Revealer of the Father, and of the Divine purposes, whom we are to hear and obey.*

* Deut. xviii. 18.—Like unto Moses, who was more than a Prophet; for through him Israel was brought out of Egypt, through him, as a servant, faithful in all God's house, Israel received the Law; he was mediator of the economy under which Israel was placed for a season. Yet greater than Moses, inasmuch as Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant, and is appointed Lord and Ruler, not as a servant, but as a Son over His own

2. The cross is also the source of His Priesthood. His whole earthly life was a preparation for His Priesthood, and breathed the priestly spirit of sympathy and intercession. Chosen from among His brethren, the Priest was a man who could be touched with the feeling of our infirmity. Jesus lived on earth, in love to God and to man; friend of sinners; knowing, bearing, healing the sorrows, infirmities, and diseases of the people; tempted in all things as we are; "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." All this was a preparation for His Priesthood. But it was on the cross that He offered Himself as a sacrifice unto God. There, He was Priest, Altar, and Sacrifice; Sin-offering, and Burnt-offering. And when He entered into the Holy of Holies, to appear before God as our Righteousness and High Priest, it was by virtue of the Blood, which He had shed on the cross; it was not by virtue of His love and grace, His priestly spirit and life on earth that He entered into the Heavenly sanctuary; when He had, by Himself, purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High. And thus His High-Priestly intercession in our behalf, the sympathy with which He now remembers and

House. Like unto Moses, to whom God spake face to face; greater than Moses, for Jesus, as the only-begotten of the Father, declared Him, and is Himself the Word of God. He that heareth not Christ, heareth not God, and can have no part in the restitution of all things, but is destroyed from among the people. (Compare Peter's quotation of Deut. xviii. 15; in Acts, iii. 20-23; also, John i. 18; iv. 19-25; vi. 14; Acts, vii. 37.)

sustains us, and the love and all-prevailing power in which He presents now our prayers and works unto the Father, His whole Priestly office is based on His death on the cross.

3. As His prophetic and priestly, so also His royal dignity. There are two kingdoms of Christ: the one hidden, in humility and grace, the other in manifest power and glory. He rules now in our hearts by His Spirit, He shall come again and rule with His glorified saints on earth. In both kingdoms His crown is based on the cross,—is essentially and inseparably connected with His sufferings in Golgotha. We are taught in the Scriptures, and most clearly in the book of Revelation, that the subjects of Christ, His disciples, who ultimately inherit the kingdom, are they, who fight the good fight of faith, who overcome by the blood of the Lamb. Christ became their King through the cross; Christ rules within them by the cross; Christ triumphs through them over sin, and the world, and Satan, by the constraining influence of His dying love, by the power of His blood. And the characteristic mark of the Church is fellowship of His sufferings.

And when the Lord shall come again in great majesty and glory, then shall be fulfilled what was written over His cross:—"Jesus Christ, King of the Jews." Israel shall look and behold the Man who is God's equal, the Man whom they pierced; and the manifestation of Jesus as the Saviour once crucified will draw all men unto Himself. Who is

King, to the glory of the Father, but Jesus the Christ, and Him crucified?

Without the cross we have no Jesus, no Messiah, Prophet, Priest, and King; Jesus Christ crucified is the true, the real, the all-sufficient Saviour.

It is for this reason that we notice in the life of our Lord, that He is continually looking forward to His death. How different from other men! They speak continually of the great work which they intend to accomplish during their life-time, of the actions and plans to which they devote their energies. Jesus always spoke of what He would accomplish by His death. While other men look upon death as the limit and termination of their work, Jesus regards His death as His great, His all-glorious work, the source and commencement of His true and eternal influence. Just go rapidly in your mind through the gospel of John, and see how constantly and emphatically the death of Christ is kept before our view. In the very first chapter, He is introduced as the sin-bearing Lamb. When He appears the first time in Jerusalem, He thinks and speaks of His death, the breaking and building again of the Temple. In His conversation with Nicodemus, He unfolds the mystery of the crucifixion; the lifting up of the Son of Man, the sacrifice of God's beloved Son. When He speaks of the bread of life which cometh down from Heaven, he does not refer to His teaching or His example, but to "My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." He calls Himself the Good Shepherd, not because he watches

over the flock, feeding them in green pastures, and leading them by quiet waters; but because He lays down His life for the sheep, as the Father gave Him commandment. When the Greeks come to the feast and desire to see Jesus, the Lord, beholding in spirit His future Church, speaks at once of the death which He must first accomplish—the corn of wheat abideth alone, except it fall into the ground and die. From the very commencement of His ministry the cross stood before the eyes of His heart. To this great mystery of salvation, He continually directed His disciples; to this great mystery of salvation He is continually leading us by His Spirit—Jesus Christ crucified. This is the Son of God, our Messiah, our All-in-all, our hope on earth, and our joy in Heaven.

Jesus Christ crucified! See here the foundation of our faith, the source of our love, the spring of our hope.

We say to the sinner: "Behold the Lamb of God!" Whatever may be your present condition, and whatever your present life, stand still and behold the salvation of God. It comes down from Heaven; it is the gift of the Father; it has not its root in your heart and character; it descends out of the fulness of Divine mercy—it is Jesus the Christ crucified. "Look unto Me and be ye saved!"

We say to the believer in every stage of his progress towards the Heavenly Jerusalem: Remain poor and needy, Christ is All-in-all; God has made Him for us righteousness in Heaven, sanctification in our hearts and lives on earth.

Here is the source of love. We may be conscious of the benefits which God bestows on us, and think with gratitude of that bountiful Hand and Fatherly Heart, never weary in blessing and guarding us; we may feel awe and adoration and sweet longing at the contemplation of Infinite Goodness and Purity; but we do not feel the burning love of God, until we see the crucified Saviour. It is then that the Holy Ghost sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts. "Amor meus crucifixus," said Ignatius. He on the cross is my Love, is the language of all saints. "He loved me and gave Himself for me." This is the source from which the ardent affection and devotedness of the Apostle Paul was continually renewed. See Jesus Christ crucified in order to love.

Here is our hope. Nothing else can sustain the Christian under his trials, afflictions and infirmities. "He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all"—no argument of less weight will comfort and uphold us in sorrow and struggle. "It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again." This is our only shelter and strong tower in temptation and doubt. And what sweeter foretaste have we of Heaven than in suffering, when we realise the sympathy of the merciful and compassionate High Priest, and when by His Spirit He assures us, that as He is afflicted in all our afflictions, so we shall share with Him His blessedness and glory? In Jesus Christ crucified is our hope.

What else will sustain the Church of Christ when she has to mourn, that few believe her report, and

that even they who call themselves after the name of Christ, make the Gospel of none effect, because the cross is an offence and foolishness to them?

Per crucem ad lucem. Through the cross to the light. This is God's way. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into glory? Through much tribulation the Church is to enter into the Kingdom of God. Despised and rejected of men, she has no strength, splendour and riches of her own, but follows the Lord, who made Himself poor, who humbled Himself, who was obedient unto the death of the cross, that all power and glory may be ascribed to His God and our God, to His Father and our Father. Amen.

LECTURE II.

THE CROSS, SEEN BY GOD AND SEEN BY THE SINNER.

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."—1 Cor. ii. 2.

The whole purposes of God have stood still for centuries, in order that sinners might be saved through the preaching of the Gospel. Jesus Christ hesitates to descend from Heaven, from the Throne of glory, in order that the word of reconciliation may be published among all nations, and the chosen of God be gathered into the fold of the Good Shepherd. The saints in the higher sanctuary and the saints on earth continually cry out, "Lord Jesus, come quickly!" But the Lord delays his coming, not because he is slack concerning His promise, but is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that repentance and remission of sins should be preached among Jews and Gentiles, that the love of God, which he manifested upon the cross, should be declared, so that poor and

needy sinners may come unto Him and find peace and life through faith in His blood.

Israel had rejected Christ. Still God in His infinite mercy sent unto them the testimony of the Apostles after the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Ghost. This also they rejected. And then, God wishing to show unto all succeeding ages His abounding grace, and the depth of His love towards sinners, raised up Saul of Tarsus, who had rejected Christ and the testimony of the Apostles after the gift of the Spirit, and had consented to the death of Stephen, the witness of Jesus. In Saul, as in a living example, God showed forth His grace, that he should be a pattern to them which should hereafter believe. That same grace, which was exceeding abundant with faith and love, made him also an Apostle among the Gentiles, to declare unto them the salvation of God; and henceforth, in all his preaching and suffering, he showed that he was "determined not to know anything but Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

He preaches Christ crucified; not the crucifixion. We do not preach the death of Christ as a past event, but we preach the Lord Himself, who, after having offered Himself by the Eternal Spirit, is now at the right hand of God, to dispense the blessings, which He has purchased with His blood. We do not go to the cross, but to Jesus the Son of God, our merciful and compassionate High Priest, who through death entered the Heavenly sanctuary. From Him we receive the gifts of His grace. He Himself bestows

the pardon, which His Atonement secured; it is He who sends forth the Spirit, whose advent depended on Christ's departure. All the blessings of the New Testament in His blood are sent by the Lord Himself, and they are doubly precious to us, because they come from the exalted Jesus, the same Saviour whose hands and feet were pierced on the cross. He bestows His gifts with Divine majesty, with supreme authority; for unto Him all power is given in Heaven and on earth. He bestows them with infinite tenderness, sweetness and sympathy, the result of His experience in the days of His humiliation. This is our great consolation, that Jesus saith unto us, "Fear not, I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore."

Christ crucified, and not the crucifixion of Christ. We need not go back to Bethlehem, to Nazareth, to the Lake of Galilee, to Jerusalem, or to Golgotha. All the manifestations of grace and truth, of which this earth was witness, have not passed away, as it were, in the stream of history. We need not regret, that we did not behold Him in the home of His childhood, or in the scenes of His teaching and mighty works of testimony and love. Every scene of His earthly life is precious, every manifestation of the glory which dwells in his pure and holy, yet true and real, humanity, is of eternal significance and value. The innocency and beauty of His infancy; the exquisite charm of His childhood, with its fragrant humility, its eager earnestness, its un-

conscious wisdom; the mysterious meekness and self-restraint of the eighteen years stillness in obscure Nazareth; the perfection of strength, love, patience, and every attribute in which man can glorify God by word and deed in this sinful earth; the growing manifestations of the Father, which His character, life, and sufferings presented to His disciples; the faithfulness and infinite love of His last days and His last hours; all this glorious treasure is still ours. Nothing has been lost; every precious fragment remains; it is all treasured up and enshrined with everlasting glory and beauty in Christ Jesus at God's right hand. We possess it all; we behold it all with joy and adoring love in the exalted Redeemer. All the experiences of His earthly life, all the innumerable excellencies of His perfections, brought out by His position as the Holy One among sinners, we see gathered up and irradiated with eternal glory in the Lord Jesus Christ. It remains to us an everlasting possession, a joy for ever. As upon earth He was Immanuel God with us, so in Heaven He is now the Man Christ Jesus with God. The sweetness of childhood, the earnestness of youth, manhood's strength and wisdom, the philanthropy, sympathy, and friendship of the perfect Man, His whole experience of earth is summed up in Him as He is to-day: the Living One who was dead. It is Jesus Christ crucified whom we preach; it is He who calls from His Heavenly Throne, "Come unto Me!"

The simplicity of the Gospel lies in its concentra-

tion—Christ's death. From this centre all doctrines radiate, as well as all vital influences and blessings. In Christ crucified the sinner finds salvation, and the believer all that pertains to life and godliness. And the reason is because God sees in the crucified Saviour His own glory manifested, and all the obstacles, which separate sinners from Divine favour and life, removed.

Let us dwell, first, on the God-ward aspect of the cross, and then on the sinner's view of Christ crucified. We consider, first, God's view, and then the sinner's view of the crucified Saviour.

1. God's view of the cross. Jesus, who is our Saviour, is the Son of God.* On the cross we behold

* Christ, the Son of God, "Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree." We believe that He Himself suffered in His human nature, not the human nature by itself. A mystery is here, and how little are we impressed by it. It was the Son of God who suffered. The Eternal Word suffered in the manhood which He had taken. In our chapter the Apostle says that men killed "the Lord of glory." The divine nature cannot suffer, but God the Son suffered in our nature. If we view in this light the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, how men reviled Him and smote Him, and when they had blindfolded Him, struck Him on the face and then crucified Him between two malefactors; and if, throughout the narrative, we realize that it was God's own Eternal Son of whom we are reading, we feel overwhelmed with a sense of the evil of sin—our sin—and the infinite love of God. Remember, then, that it is not only the Son of Man, whose brows were crowned with thorns, whose side was pierced with the spear, whose blood was shed, whose hands were nailed: it is the Son of God, who loved you and gave *Himself* for you; nay, the Apostle Paul does not hesitate to use the expression, that the Church was purchased with God's own blood.

our redemption; but let us also remember that we behold there the accomplishment of the Father's purpose, and the unfolding of His glory. He who is our Saviour belongs unto God the Father. As the Apostle reminds us, "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and *Christ is God's.*" Therefore, when we wish to see the foundation upon which our hope rests, the real and ultimate truth which is manifested unto us upon the cross as the basis of our salvation, we must look away from ourselves; we must look above ourselves and our own thoughts, and inquire what was God's idea in sending forth His Son to die on Golgotha. We call Jesus *our* Shepherd: God calls Jesus *His* Shepherd (Zech). We call Jesus the Child that was born for us, the Son that was given unto us: God speaks of Jesus as the Branch, the Man that grows up before Him, to be His delight, and to carry out His will and work (Isaiah). We look upon Jesus as the Lamb provided for our salvation: the Scriptures call Jesus the *Lamb of God.* And, therefore, the ultimate foundation of all our blessings and hope is this—"I and the Father are one." Between the Father and the Son there never is any cloud of darkness, but the reign of uninterrupted sunshine, love and joy; and it is out of the fulness of this sunshine of love and joy, that the blessing descends into our own hearts (John xvii).

Thus, we have in Scripture, as it were, opening to our view a large territory, an immense and varied expanse of country, where there are beautiful

valleys and smiling gardens and lovely hills, and where even the feeblest of God's children can walk, and be refreshed, and strengthened, and find an easy path for his weakness and the limited measure of his power. But in that immense territory of Scripture there are also sublime mountains, the summits of which reach up into clouds and into heights bathed in the perennial light, dark by excess of brightness. Such heights we behold in Scripture, in those majestic revelations, where we are introduced, as it were, for a moment's glimpse *into that eternal life which was in God—into that secret counsel of peace between the Father and the Son,* and in which our salvation, with its manifold blessings, was ordered in infinite wisdom and love. And two such wonderful heights of Scripture are the concluding chapters of the Prophet Isaiah and the Gospel according to John. In the prophecies of the Old Testament Evangelist we hear the voice of God the Father expressing His infinite love and delight in that servant whom He has chosen—that elect one whom He upholdeth, whom He sends forth to declare and to bring forth His righteousness and "to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel." God the Father speaks of him with infinite love and with infinite delight; and he, the Servant, the Chosen One, pours out before the Father all his grief and all his sorrow, reminds Him of his promises, commits himself and his work unto His care and power; the Father consoles and upholds him with everlasting consolations; giving

him renewed assurance of his reward and revealing unto him again that His work can never fail, and that his sufferings must be crowned with victory and glory. And thus it is that in the Gospel of John also, more than in any other portion of the Word, we are taught of that love and communion, which are from eternity between the Father and the Son, and in which our redemption and our glory were ordained. "This commandment have I received of the Father, that I lay down my life for the sheep. Therefore doth my Father love me." Looking beyond His sufferings, He prays that the Father may glorify Him with the glory which He had with Him, even before the foundations of the world were laid.

As the Father always beheld Jesus, and as all the life of Christ on earth was *primarily* lived unto God and before God, even as Christ was in God; so the death of the Saviour on the cross has its most important aspect God-wards. His life on earth was an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour. What was His death on the cross to the Father? What is God's view of Jesus Christ crucified?

In the first place, God beheld upon the cross perfect humanity; the perfection of humanity. The idea, which God had in His mind, when he created man in his own image, and appointed him a king upon the earth, and gave him power and dominion over all things, had never been realized. The task was before Adam, but he never fulfilled it; and, since the fall of man, of all the countless myriads

which had been born into the world, there never appeared one, who was holy and righteous and loving in the eyes of God, until at last "the Day-spring from on high visited us," through the tender mercy of our God, and there was born of the Virgin Mary, the holy child Jesus. And for the first time, God the Father beheld His own thought fulfilled and realized. That child Jesus was understood only by the Father, and all the various manifestations of innocence and love, which were not noticed or appreciated by any human eye, which were noticed and to some extent appreciated by the watchful angels, were treasured up by God the Father. Jesus, as a child, manifested perfect docility and clinging love to God, He could not be anywhere else, but in that element where the Father revealed Himself—this also went up to God as a sweet smelling savour. And when after the quiet obscure life in Nazareth, Jesus at the age of thirty came forth to be baptized by John, God the Father declared from heaven, that all those thirty years He had seen nothing else in His holy child Jesus, but His own image reflected. And when, after having been tested by Satan in the wilderness, and, having remained faithful unto his God and Father, he went forth to declare the glad tidings of salvation and to be a Prophet with great power and might among Israel, all his words were but the echo of his father's teachings; all his doings were but the fulfilment of God's work. Love to God and love to man were blended in him with perfect harmony. Not merely was Christ sinless,

but Christ was perfect — that is to say, every energy of body, mind, and soul, every faculty and power with which God has endowed man, every chamber of that wonderful temple and structure, which was to be filled with the glory of God— everything was developed according to the mind and purpose of God. There was not a single string in that harp, from which there did not come forth melody and praise unto God the Lord. And it was not merely that He was perfect and that He was the true ark of the covenant, in the midst of which there was hid the law of God, but He was tested in a world of sin, in a world of darkness, in a world of temptation; tested by the ignorance and prejudice and evil of Israel; tested by the weakness and the carnal thoughts of his own disciples; tested by the cunning and malice of Satan; tested as no other human being ever was, because none had so many avenues to influences from without. No man had such sensibilities, was so tender, was so exquisitely alive unto everything good and beautiful, which Satan tempted him to obtain through evil. He *suffered*, being tempted, and yet He remained faithful. When on that last evening before His death, in prayer to the Father, and in the hearing of His disciples, He reviewed His past life, He felt that He had not to regret a single moment of the past, that there was not a single word He wished unuttered, nor a single step recalled. He had finished the work which the Father gave Him to do; He had glorified Him upon earth. He could

look back upon the whole of his past life as a beautiful and uninterrupted river of obedience unto God, in love to the Father and to man.

It was this perfect and Holy Son and Servant of God, who in the Garden of Gethsemane resolved in infinite anguish of mind, to expose Himself unto the just condemnation which sin had deserved, and who went forth, like a mighty man who has girded himself for the battle, unto the cross of Calvary. When God the Father beheld Him upon the cross, even as Abraham, when he saw Isaac, with the greatest meekness and humility, suffer himself to be bound and laid upon the altar, He was "well pleased in him." Never did Jesus appear so lovely in His Father's eyes as there, where the Father was about to leave Him. It was God's counsel, that Jesus Christ upon the cross should bear the iniquity of us all. *He* put him to grief (Isaiah liii). It was God who made Jesus, that knew no sin, to be sin for us. It was according to the will of God the Father, into which the Son entered from all eternity in His infinite love, and which as man he had continually in his heart, that He who was holy and righteous should now enter into the very dust and darkness of our death. For thousands of years men had sinned against God, and the sword of God's justice and righteousness had remained sheathed within His long-suffering. Now, there appears at last one who was perfect in all His works, and the sword of God went forth to smite the Shepherd, that was His Equal.

We must always bear in mind, that when Jesus became the sin-offering; when the Father hid from Him His countenance; when Jesus was left alone, with our sin lying upon Him, tasting the bitterness of death, feeling what sin is and what sin deserves, and without the support and light of any manifestation of the favour and love of God—we must always remember, that it was then, that Jesus was most precious in the sight of God. It was then, that His humanity was sublimated to the utmost pitch in love to God; and it was then that, clinging to us in our misery, His heart was perfected in infinite mercy, faithfulness, and compassion towards us whom in His condescension He adopted as brethren. The Father beheld now his only-begotten and well-beloved Son, clinging to the righteousness of God, which he acknowledged, loved and glorified, clinging to the misery of His people, whom he could never forsake. God He would not leave, nor question or shrink from Holy justice: sinners he would not leave in their guilt, misery, and lost condition. And thus it is that, in His sacrifice, His love to God and His love to man were made perfect: when, with immovable strength of purpose and intense energy of spirit, He suffered all the billows and waves of God's wrath to go over Him, His sufferings were the highest and most voluntarily *act; His death was His work.* Therefore the Father beheld in the death of Christ the greatest manifestation of His glory. Here Christ is the perfect Mediator. Divine

righteousness, and holiness loved by Man with infinite love—this was beheld by the Father, even as in Him the holy love of God is seen by man.

Heaven and earth were created to glorify God; the angels were called into existence to show forth His praise; man was created specially to be the image of God—the connecting link between things spiritual and things that are material and visible; but the Lord Jesus Christ, in His death on the cross, brought into the universe—brought before God—a more transcendant manifestation of glory, which through all eternity will be the Father's delight, and the adoration of angels and saints. His Incarnation, incomprehensible and unfathomable mystery of love, of humility, of obedience, of sacrifice, shines forth most gloriously on the cross. Love to God, in the unity and perfection of all His holy attributes, and love to man, known in all the depth of guilt and loathsomeness, were here tested, not merely by all the sorrow and pain, grief and anguish, which the world and the Prince of Darkness could inflict, and which an infinitely pure and tender soul could suffer in the body of weakness, but also by the wrath of God Himself, who withdrew from the Son of His love the manifestation of light and favour, which was His very life and joy of life. The love and ministry of angels, the obedience of unfallen man in Paradise, are not to be compared with the infinite glory which is in the crucified Saviour.

2. In the Saviour, obedient unto death, the Father

saw us perfectly acquitted, justified, sanctified, glorified for ever. God condemned sin in the flesh. Our sin was upon Jesus: the wrath of God, therefore, was upon Jesus; but the Son of God, in His human nature, and in our stead bore the wrath and indignation of the Lord, and the burden of our sin was removed and buried for evermore. "The sting of death is sin; the strength of sin is the law." He was made sin for us; He bore the curse of the law; He swallowed up death in victory; He bruised the head of the Serpent. Where is sin? Behold, it is not merely atoned for and expiated; it is condemned, it is destroyed, it is consumed by the wrath of God; Christ has taken away sin. Where is the law? The handwriting of ordinances, that was against us is blotted out and taken out of the way, nailed to the cross, and in Christ's death we have died to the law. Where is death? Christ died once unto sin, and liveth now unto God. Where is Satan? The Prince of this World is judged. God beholds us in Christ delivered from sin, from law, from death, from Satan; sinless, holy, living, and free are we in His sight. Christ hath taken captive our very captivity; and instead of all the obstacles which were between God and us, *God and man see the Mediator, Jesus Christ crucified.*

But not merely did God see us on the cross justified, but he saw us also invested with Christ's righteousness, greater than that of innocence and purity, which Adam had before he fell; greater than that of unfailing angelic obedience; for this,

though good and complete, is not divine and infinite. But now there was offered something unto God in our behalf, and in our stead, that was divine and that was infinite: He has brought in an everlasting righteousness. He Himself is Jehovah Tsidkenu—the Lord our righteousness. We speak of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ as being instead of our death; but here is more than substitution in the sense of equivalent. The condemnation of the wicked is according to justice. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Sin against an infinite God brings with it infinite punishment and misery, as it is an infinite evil. But although God, according to His justice and holiness, must punish sin, he has no pleasure in that punishment. God is not glorified, I think, in the true sense of the word, in the punishment of the wicked. The punishment of the wicked is in harmony with the attributes of God, but it is no manifestation unto the universe of the hidden depths of God's nature, of God Himself, of love. He must punish, but it is no satisfaction to Him. In all the agony, misery and wretchedness of the lost, there is no satisfaction to God; nothing that is acceptable to Him, there is nothing that ascends out of that abyss to please God. But, oh! how different was it with the punishment of our peace, which was upon Christ. How different was it with the agony which the Lord Jesus Christ endured, when the Father hid His countenance from him! The sufferings which the Lord Jesus Christ endured, ascended unto God as a sweet

smelling savour. This obedience glorifies him. These sufferings show forth righteousness, holiness, love, and truth, as nothing else in the universe. Unto all eternity God will remember with joy, that Jesus died upon the cross, the just for the unjust; out of the fulness of this delight will stream down again unto us the blessing of God. God will never be weary (to speak after the manner of men) throughout the endless ages, to hear angels, and ransomed saints sing: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" He will rejoice to be reminded, that Jesus was made sin for us, because in the sufferings of Jesus was that perfect obedience of faith and love, which delights the Heavenly Father.

As we are not merely justified, but accepted with delight in the Beloved, so God sees us on the cross sanctified; for when Jesus died, God judged and destroyed our sins. It is not merely that he took away the guilt of our sins, but he executed all our sins, that we should be perfectly and eternally delivered from sin, and that we should be holy and blameless before Him. He has put them away for ever. In Christ His people are seen free from all sin, whiter than snow and complete.*

* "The death of Christ, when sin lay upon Him, was, I think, the condemnation of all that so lay upon Him, with the pardon of their persons and the execution or destruction of their sins. Condemnation of sin to death goes along with the adjudication of persons to life. Christ died for the destruction of sin, but for the salvation of the unjust. . . . So you see how intimately our justification and our sanctification are connected, and our justifi-

II. Consider what is the view which the sinner takes of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Three things happen when, by the Spirit of God, the sinner is brought to see Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and these three are essentially and inseparably connected. First, the sinner is brought into contact with the holiness of God, and repents. Secondly, the sinner is brought into contact with the love of God, and believes. Thirdly, the sinner is brought into contact with the power of God, and is regenerated.

What is repentance? Fear is the natural consequence of sin. But fear is not repentance. A man after having sinned, is hurt in his self-esteem. He says: "Have I been so undignified as to do such an action? Have I so little control over myself as to yield to this temptation?" His pride is hurt. Wounded pride and self-esteem is not repentance. Or a man may feel sorrow, for having done something, which is not according to the standard of righteousness and truth, which lives within him.

cation when we apprehend it deeply enough is the virtual execution of our sins. The connection between justification and sanctification is not insisted on so much [by post-reformation theologians] as the distinction. The judicial sentence passes into effect, and all that passes in our sanctification, is adjudicated in our justification. It takes place *personally* in our union to Christ, but it is all virtually contained in the life and death of Christ Himself. God's pardon of our persons, and the executing our sins both took place, in our being, as the Apostle says, "crucified with Christ;" nor can ever I consider justification and sanctification further separated than as a legal sentence, and the actual execution of it."—Dr. Duncan, *Colloquia*, 81-82.

This sorrow, although not without noble elements, is not repentance. Repentance is a return unto God. The Hebrew word for "repentance" is "return." Repentance is unto life. Repentance is when Jesus Christ the crucified is beheld; as it is said in the prophet Zechariah, "They shall look unto me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for me." Repentance is when the kingdom of God is brought nigh, and the voice of John the Baptist is heard: "Turn; for the love of God has come to visit you." Repentance is when the prodigal says, "I will arise and go to my Father." Oh! however tearful and sad repentance may be, there is a note of joy in it; there is in it a pulsation of love, a beginning of life. When the sinner sees the holiness of God in a crucified Saviour, who loved us even unto the end, then he returns unto Him; he repents; he sees the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and thirsts after God.

But as the sinner turns unto the holiness of God, nowhere so brightly and gloriously manifested unto the conviction of our transgression as on the cross of Jesus, he feels also the love of God—love undeserved —love infinitely out of proportion to anything that we are or that we have done—love which cannot be compared with anything, that has ever been seen or known upon earth—love that is stronger than the strongest, even death—love that seeks those who are unworthy and unattractive, not merely to deliver them from evil, but to bring them into an inseparable union with itself. Oh, what a

wonderful love is here! And what can we do with this love? Can we understand it? No. Can we merit it? No. Can we do anything to make ourselves more worthy of it? No. Can the labour of years lessen the distance between its greatness and our desert? No. What can a sinner do with the love of Christ? The only thing he can do with it is—believe. The revelation of the love of God in Jesus calls forth faith. "I will trust myself to that love. It is perfect; it is glorious; it is infinite; it is undeserved. I will go into this depth of blessedness and of joy, and be beloved of God." And when the sinner does this, when he repents and when he trusts, when he weeps and when he rejoices, when he sees his nothingness, and when he sees the abundance of God's love, he does not say, "I *will* become different," but he *has* become different. He does not say, "I *will go* to God," but he *has been* brought to God: he has been attracted, he has been riveted, he has been drawn—drawn by the Father, drawn by Jesus.—"I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." He does not say, "I will make myself a new heart," but he *has* been born again; he has been regenerated; he has been renewed. The power of God has come into contact with him, and he has been quickened unto eternal life.

The question, "What is necessary to our salvation?" is answered in Scripture by three assertions. "Except ye repent ye shall perish." "He that believeth on the Son of God shall be saved." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the

kingdom of God." We must repent; we must believe; we must be born again. But these three are one. What comes first? It is difficult to see the sequence of spiritual or eternal things. The power of God comes first and radiates into these two elements, repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. With some repentance preponderates: it is only with difficulty that we can comfort them, and show unto them that Jesus is the Saviour. With some faith preponderates: they rejoice at once in a crucified Christ. Repentance, in which there is no faith is no true repentance: a faith in which there is no repentance is no true faith. If those, who so quickly rejoice in Christ Jesus are not superficial, but truly believing, they will go into the school of repentance a little later: it is only changing the sequence of experience. The Spirit gives to some, to feel more prominently sin; he gives to another to feel more prominently the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; but we must all go through the same teaching sooner or later. Those who rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have only a superficial view of sin, will at some subsequent period be led by the Spirit of God into a deeper knowledge of their heart. There will come a time in which sorrow and contrition preponderate over joy and thanksgiving. Yet there was even at the beginning the element of repentance in their joy. The true test of repentance is: Do you rejoice in Christ Jesus? The true test of joy: Have you any confidence in the flesh?

The sinner beholds Jesus Christ as all his salvation,

he therefore goes as he is to Jesus for pardon and renewal. Christ is our temple; Christ is our altar; Christ is our sacrifice; Christ is our High-Priest, and none but sinners must come to Christ, and sinners must bring nothing to Christ, but simply cling to His cross and put their trust in the blood, that was shed for the remission of sins. And as the Lord Jesus Christ is perfect, so there is nothing between us and Jesus Christ, nothing to intercept his love and his power. When we behold Christ in the perfection of His holy walk on earth, we feel attracted by His grace and purity; but between Him and us there is a great distance and a chasm, which no work of man can fill up; in the brightness of this mirror we only perceive the more clearly our unworthiness and guilt. But when we behold Him on the cross, we see the Holy One of Israel as our Redeemer. He is now an open door, through the rent veil of His flesh we can enter into the Holy of Holies. And to this door we need no other portal; we stand immediately before It. Christ is the way, and He is the door to the way. When we survey the wondrous cross, we see that, as it reaches into the loftiest height—even the Heavenly Sanctuary itself—so it descended to the lowest depth—our guilt, condemnation and death. Christ on the cross is Alpha. We begin with Him. Nothing can precede Him. Poor and lost sinners, begin with Jesus as the Alpha, then shall you know and praise Him throughout eternity as the Omega. Amen.

LECTURE III.

THE BELIEVER'S VIEW OF THE CROSS.

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."—1 Cor. ii. 2.

We considered, in our last meditation, the twofold aspect of the cross: towards God and towards man. What a meeting-place is this for God and the sinner! Christ crucified by our sins brings to us God in the fulness of love; brings us to God in the fulness of righteousness.

As our life begins at the cross, so, throughout our new life, Christ crucified is the centre of our faith and love.

You who believe in Jesus Christ, think that the step from your present state into glory will be a very wonderful and great step. When John, the beloved disciple, beheld the multitude which no man could number, who were arrayed in white robes, and had palms in their hands, and when He was asked "Who are these?" he hesitated to give a reply, but said, "Sir, thou knowest." There was

such a difference between their brightness, beauty, and joy, and the weakness, sorrow, and struggle which characterizes the children of God upon earth, that he had not courage to describe them as his brethren, the former companions in tribulation and patience; and yet, the step from grace to glory is not so marvellous as the step from nature to grace. That we who believe in Jesus Christ should, after a while, be delivered from all sin, weakness, and sorrow, and that every angel who sees us should say at once, "These are the people of Christ, the members of His body: see how like they are unto Him,"—this is not such a great marvel, as that we who were under the condemnation of the law, and who were dead in trespasses and sins, should, through the blood of Jesus Christ, and by the quickening touch of the Holy Ghost, in a moment, have been brought nigh unto the Father; not merely acquitted, but beautified with the glorious righteousness and perfection of Jesus Christ Himself; not merely raised into life, but quickened together with Christ, so that He and we are one. From nature to grace, from condemnation to acceptance, from death in Adam to life in Jesus Christ, behold, this is the greatest marvel of Divine omnipotence and love! Coming to the cross the sinner repents, the sinner believes, the sinner is regenerated. Tears fill his eyes because he has sinned; the burden rolls off his back because Jesus has died; the heart of stone is taken away from him, and the heart of flesh is given unto him; for, as the

prophet says, "A new heart will I give unto them, *for* I will forgive their transgressions and remember their iniquity no more." What more is necessary now? Why should He not be glorified in a moment? what hinders him to be transplanted at once into the realm of blessedness and of purity? Nothing; he is perfect. Ripe for glory is every one who is converted. So was that thief on the cross, although he had no days or hours to live upon earth, to bring forth fruit unto God. The whole law of God was fulfilled in him. A man who acknowledges his sin, who acknowledges the justice of his condemnation, who clings, in the lowest depth of guilt and helplessness, with all the fibres of his soul, unto Jesus Christ; who is not ashamed to bear the reproach of the crucified, and to testify for him when even Simon Peter and the beloved disciple John were silent; who bears patiently and meekly all the afflictions and tortures which he had to endure—he has brought forth all the fruits of the Spirit. "Against such there is no law." He is not merely forgiven, but he is a new creature in Christ Jesus, and the law of God is fulfilled in him, for he is no longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit. Thus the Apostle Paul says, "Whom He justifies He glorifies." (Rom. viii.) He passes over all our life upon earth, and all that we commonly call sanctification. According to His view, sanctification is already implied in justification. He sees the sinner, dead and condemned by the law, called by the power

and grace of God; brought to faith in Christ, He is justified: the next step is that He is glorified. "Whom He justifies He glorifies." But, as a rule, the believer is not called to glory immediately after his conversion; he is called to continue in this world of sin and sorrow, and to live on earth the life of faith and obedience. It is thus that God is glorified, that the saints are taught by the Spirit and grow in grace, that the Church is built up, and that through our testimony souls are brought into the fold of Christ. And during their earthly life, what is their experience? Forty years were the children of Israel in the wilderness, a journey which they might easily have accomplished in eight or nine days; and thus is the course of the believer, not in a straight line forward, but in ever renewing and enlarging circles; circles which bring him not upward but downward into the feeling of his utter dependence on Christ, and of his utter need of the continual supply of the grace of God.

There are in this varied experience, times which we would call Marah, that is bitter, and times which we would call Elim, when, under the shade of refreshing trees, the Lord renews our strength and gives unto us a soul-reviving glimpse of His love and tender mercy. There are times when we are with Jesus Christ upon the height of Tabor, and behold Him in His glory, and feel how good it is to be there; and there are times when we are in the valley, and would call the place Bochim,

because our grief is as deep as that of Jeremiah, when he "forgat prosperity." There are times when it seems as if even the sun in the heavens could not go down, although the time of sunset is fully come, but that through the strength of Joshua, the daylight is continued even into the night. And there are other times when, like the Apostle Paul, we are tossed to and fro upon the waves of the sea; and there is no sun by day, and at night neither moon nor stars appear. Through wonderful variety of experiences the believer is led; but all issuing in this—Jesus increases and the believer decreases. And, therefore, you find that after the four Gospels—the manifestation of God in Christ Jesus, and after the Book of Acts—the conversion of souls and the origin of the Church, there are so many Epistles necessary for the direction and sustenance of the believer during this zig-zag journey through the wilderness of life. Even Ephesus, diligent, zealous, laborious, forsakes her first love. Even the Galatians, so ardent in their affection for the Apostle Paul, and rejoicing in the fulness of the Gospel, are carried away by false teachers, and look at their beloved Father with suspicion. Even Corinth, enriched in all utterance, and wisdom, and understanding, falls into vanity, and pride, and sin. The Hebrews, who were martyrs for Jesus Christ, and counted it joy to suffer the spoiling of their goods, stand now in danger of apostacy, and the Apostle Paul strives to unfold unto them the fulness of the glory of

Jesus Christ, in order to encourage them to persevere. Constantly do we need the exhortation: Abide in Christ!

The great task of our Christian life is to hold fast the beginning of our confidence, and not to depart from the simplicity which is in Christ Jesus. We remain poor and needy, guilty and sinful, dependent entirely and exclusively on the grace of Christ. Were we to live a thousand years after our conversion, at the end of our course we would say, with as much truth and reality as at the commencement,

> "Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to Thy cross I cling."

Now, see the provision that our Saviour has made for the believer; and this will confirm what I have said, and what some persons, perhaps, may think is too great a narrowing-in of the whole believer's life—that he must know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

What did our Saviour do? The task was this: He wished to institute something that would secure the believer's growth and well-being upon earth. Christ Himself must be remembered; peace of conscience must be maintained; the mystery of sanctification must be set forth; the doctrine of the Church and the unity of believers must be taught; the position of the believer in the world with regard to sin and everything that is around him must be pointed out; and the bright hope of the future—the return of Christ—must be set before the eye of

the believer. How is it possible to combine all doctrines into one single institution? What seems impossible to human ingenuity was accomplished by the infinite wisdom of the loving Saviour. The same night in which He was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, "Take, eat: this is my body: this do in remembrance of me." Likewise, also, when He had supped, He took the cup and said, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood: drink ye all of it, for as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death until he come." Here is the whole doctrine of Christianity; the whole experience of the Christian; all that we need during our pilgrimage—"Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

For here is Christ for us—the broken body, and the wine, the blood shed. Here is Christ in us—we eat the bread and drink the wine. Here is the doctrine of the Church—we are His body; He and the believers are one. Here is the union of the believers. We all eat of the same bread. "Drink ye all of it." Here you see the attitude of the believer with regard to the world. He is dead to the world. We show the death of the Lord. And here is the expectation and hope of the believer. He does this "until He comes." Jesus Christ crucified is thus all the believer's experience.

1. Jesus Christ for us. "My body broken, my blood shed, for the remission of sins." The history of the Jewish nation began with the passover. Without

the passover there would be no Jewish nation. The Jewish year begins with this; and thus it is that Christian life begins with redemption. But the continuation of our life is only in constant beholding of Christ's atonement. Not merely to be saved from condemnation and death do we look at first, like the wounded Israelites, to the Son of Man lifted up. In order to remain in the state of salvation, in the possession and enjoyment of life, we must continue to fix the eyes of our heart on Christ crucified. Faith knows no past tense. It is not an isolated act. "He that believeth;" not he who at some past time has believed, but "he that believeth in the Son of God." "Unto whom coming"—always coming—as the foundation-stone which God has laid, we have life eternal.

Forgiveness of sin, through faith in Christ, requires to be continually brought before us. "If we walk in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Why this "and?" The force of the conjunction is significant. If you "walk in the light" you will see the innumerable spots, sins, and iniquities that are upon you. The more we walk in the light the more is it necessary that there should be repeated to us that blessed assurance: "*and* the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Our consciousness of sin increases in proportion as our communion is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. But not for

a single moment ought the believer to allow his sin to keep him from God and from Jesus Christ. Our very sins drive us to the Father, who delights in mercy, and to Jesus Christ, who ever liveth as our High Priest and Intercessor. "This is my body which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of me." "Wherever there is forgiveness of sin," Martin Luther often said, "there is life and blessedness." Oh, how difficult sometimes is it to believe the forgiveness of sin! It may be very easy when the conscience is dormant, and when love is languid; but when sin is felt as exceeding sinful, and all your past transgressions rise up against you—then to say, "His body was broken for me," is not within human power; it is the gift of the Holy Ghost; it is God Himself who enables us to "lay our sins on Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God."

Christ for us; then are not merely our sins forgiven, but we are beloved of the Father. Oh, what a transfer took place on the cross! When Christ was on the cross we were on the cross with him, so dark, so sinful, so polluted, so defiled, that God could not look on Christ, because He had laid on Him the iniquities of us all! We have remained there; we have never been separated from Christ crucified; the sheep which he found and saved lies still on his shoulder; there we are still. But how are we there now? As the high priest in Israel bore the twelve tribes on the breastplate—jewels full of light, beauty, and variety—even thus

are the dark and sin-polluted sinners now changed into gems, jewels upon the breastplate of Jesus Christ. Nothing but love surrounds us now. Beneath us, love rescued us from destruction, by tasting death and enduring the cross for us. Above us, the Father's love, as it sent Christ to die, receives us, and bestows on us the love with which He loved His Son. Around us are the arms of Jesus; once nailed to the cross, now full of tenderness and power, one with the arms of the Father, who receives us graciously. God was, in Christ crucified, reconciling us to Himself.* And sin has become the occasion of the brightest revelation of God: God is love!

2. Christ, who is for us, is also in us. Taking the bread and the cup represents faith laying hold on Jesus as a Saviour. But by faith we are united with Christ. And this is shown by our eating the bread and drinking of the cup.

We are sanctified in Christ. He, and not the Holy Ghost, is our sanctification as well as our righteousness. Without the Spirit we could neither be justified nor sanctified; for it is the Spirit of God who enables us to believe in Jesus, and it is the Spirit of God who applies unto us the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that we are sanctified; but *Christ* is "made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." It may be a misleading idea, that after the Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed on the cross it is now the work

* Notice the union between the Father and Christ: God commendeth His love toward us in that *Christ* died. (Rom. v.)

and office of the Holy Ghost to sanctify. It is so, but not more than it is the work and office of the Holy Ghost to bring us unto the Lord Jesus Christ in repentance and in faith. Our sanctification is in Christ Jesus himself. Again, some people think, that sanctification means this,—"Jesus has loved me and died for me; what a motive have I now to live unto God! How shall I show my gratitude, how shall I show my love, except by walking in the commandments of God?" This is perfectly true, and we cannot say so to ourselves too often; but Christ is more than our motive for sanctification; he *is* our sanctification.

How is Jesus our sanctification? The Apostle Paul (Rom. vi.) and the Apostle John (1 John iii.), when speaking of the believer's relation to sin, explain, not so much that the believer *ought* not to sin, but that he cannot sin. The Apostle Paul tells us that, when Jesus Christ died upon the cross, we have died with him; died unto the condemnation of the law, and died unto the power of sin. Our old man—everything that constituted our sinful nature and our position as sinners—was nailed to the cross with Jesus Christ. How, then, is it possible for us who have died with the Lord Jesus Christ to live any longer unto that very element, from which we have been separated, and separated in the most radical manner possible, by death? How is it possible for us to do otherwise than to live unto God? The connection between yourself and sin has been cut, severed by the death of the Lord Jesus

Christ. Sin and you stand no longer in a vital connexion. You have been delivered from sin; although sin is still within you, yet you do not belong to sin. You have been separated from the root and fountain of sin; you have been taken away out of the territory of the devil, though he is continually tempting us, and has the power of death. You have been transplanted (as a tree is rooted out) from the territory of Satan, death, and sin, into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. How can we sin—we that have died unto sin? Jesus died unto sin once. (Rom. vi. 10.) Until he died upon the cross, he who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, had to do with sin; he had the responsibility of sinners upon him. He had the power and the enmity of the adversary to contend with. He died unto sin once. Oh, what an infinite distance below him is now that old region of sin and death! He is now seated in glory where sins no more can rise. "In that he liveth he liveth unto God." He is free, he has no other life but to glorify God in sending down light, and love, and all the blessings entrusted to His unchangeable Priesthood, unto all, who in humble faith cling to him.

The Apostle Paul thus teaches us, that we cannot sin, because God regards Christ's death as our death. The Apostle John teaches us the same truth, that we cannot sin; but his argument is from a different point of view. He reminds us that we are born of God; that whosoever believeth that Jesus is the

Christ is of God; partaker of the Divine nature, as the Apostle Peter expresses it. The new creature—the child of God—cannot sin. Why? Because the seed of God abideth in Him; he is begotten of incorruptible seed; he was created anew in the image of God, in holiness and righteousness. "But," you say, "I do always sin. I feel that sin is present with me. I often transgress the commandments of God. I often do that which is not according to the mind of Jesus. I feel it only too painfully; I feel it too frequently; I feel it too undeniably that I am always sinning." Yes, notwithstanding our position and new nature, we do continually sin; but remember what the Apostle says: Do not admit that you belong to sin. You must reckon yourself to have died unto sin and to have become alive unto righteousness. When you sin, say, "Although I am guilty, and must obtain the forgiveness of God, yet I belong unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and in Him is my life." "My life is hid with Christ in God." "I am the vine; ye are the branches." If I wish to avoid sin, to become like unto Christ, and to do the works which Christ did —what is my only method? The only method is this, "Take, eat! This is my body." This is the divine method of growth. Abiding in Jesus, we bring forth fruit. When you see those bright saints who surround the throne of God, nearer unto Christ than the angels, and ask:

> "How bright these glorious spirits shine,
> Whence all their white array?"

The answer is: They have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. Christ was their sanctification.

3. We do not sit at the table of the Lord alone, but with our fellow-believers. Jesus Christ crucified is the centre of the Church. The first gathering of the Church is in the eternal counsel of God. The second gathering of the Church is on the cross. God has made the iniquities of us all to meet upon Him. In eternity we were all in God's mind as belonging to Christ; chosen in Him unto the praise of the glory of His grace; then in time we all, like sheep, went astray, each one going into his own path, led away by sin and the imaginations of the heart. God gathered us together unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, when He laid down His life as a ransom for our sins. Then there is the third gathering, by conversion, in faith and love. This is shown at that wonderful table which He has prepared for us. We ask Christ, "Where is the Church?" He says, "The Church is where I, the Crucified One, am trusted and loved." We ask Christ: "What is the Church?" Christ says, "My body." "Why persecutest thou *me?*" He said to Paul, and Paul never forgot that word; and all his doctrine of the Church developed out of that saying. Again, if you ask the Church, "What is the Church?" the Church begins to speak of Christ and points to Him. She says, "We are in Christ. We desire not to be found in ourselves, having our own righteousness, but to be found in Him. He is all in all."

See here the love which the Christian ought to have to all fellow-believers. First, the extent of it: "Drink ye *all* of it." Every one that believes in Jesus belongs to him. As the Apostle says, if a man is very ignorant, if a man is offended at things which ought not to offend him, shall we, who are strong, and who are more advanced in knowledge, feel at liberty to hurt the feelings, or to be a stumbling-block to one for whom Christ died? Then, as the extent of love comprises all for whom the Lord died—the method and measure of the love is described by the Saviour: "As I have loved you." Christ gave us a new commandment to love one another, and to love our enemies. New; not that this love was unknown to the Israelites of old. But the measure, standard and example of the Substitute's love, if known unto the Israelites, was known only darkly in a mystery. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends." "As I have loved you, so love ye."

Jesus Christ crucified is the source of the Christian's love—specially to the Church, but also unto all to whom is sent the word of reconciliation, that we may attract and win them, that our priestly affection and Christlike yearning for them, and our intercessory prayers in their behalf may draw down the blessing of God and the saving grace of the Lord Christ.

4. "Ye show the death of the Lord." See our relation to the world! The Christian has died when Jesus died: that is the foundation. But now there

is a continuation of this dying: he continues dead unto the world, in a twofold sense. In the first place, the world is transitory, it passes away. Therefore, says the Apostle: "They that have wives, let them be as though they had no wives; they that use the world, as not abusing it; they that buy, as though they possessed not." We belong to another world, which shall abide for ever. "We look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The world to which we belong as citizens, is that world in which shines the glory of the Lamb who was crucified for us. Therefore we can say, that the love of God has delivered us from the love of the world, even in so far as the world is innocent. To us it is a transitory world.

"'Tis the treasure I found in his love
Hath made me a stranger below."

But the world (the present æon) is, secondly, an evil world, and Christ has died for the very purpose of delivering us from it. (Gal. i. 4.) "Love not the world! If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Therefore, if we show the death of the Lord, we show also that we have died unto this present world, with its great prince: the Devil; with its central principle: selfishness, self-glory, and seeking to find happiness in that which is created, with all its maxims, pleasures, and honours; it does not exist for us any more. "By the cross of Christ I am crucified unto the world and the world unto me."

In our union with the crucified Saviour we gain the true view of our own sufferings, so that in them we have fellowship with Christ, being made conformable unto his death. All men have afflictions; the Christians only have the cross. We do not bear Christ's cross. He was alone when he expiated our sins; nothing can be added to His sufferings. Our sorrows are not to satisfy Divine justice. In this sense there is no punitive element in them. Though God may be rebuking and correcting us in affliction, it is in love and not in anger. Our sufferings are transfigured into the cross, when we condemn our sins, and the flesh, when we acknowledge our unworthiness, when we school ourselves not to be disappointed with the thorns and thistles, which the ground of nature brings forth. Then are we able to rejoice that, though we are daily dying, our Canaan withers not. We can cling to the love of God though all things are against us. Only from Christ crucified can we receive the true spirit of suffering. We do not arm ourselves with weapons of pride, a haughty self-exaltation, world-contempt, or stony isolation. Looking at the Lamb of God, we are meek and lowly, allowing nothing to embitter us against our fellow men, hating and dreading only sin, carrying within our souls the secret of peace and joy which the world and the sufferings of time cannot disturb. Thus, also, do we show the Lord's death.

And in all this we are looking forward to a bright future; Jesus Christ, who was crucified, will come

again. "This do till I come." We are always looking forward unto the appearing of our great God and Saviour. If we suffer with Him, if we resemble Him in His Lamb-like character, we shall also reign with Him, and resemble Him in the manifestation of glory and power. He has gone to prepare a place for us. He prepares this place in a two-fold way: above in Heaven, waiting till the appointed time comes, when the Father will send Him. He arranges and overrules all the events of Providence with only one point in view, His second coming. "Behold, I come quickly!" And down below, He is preparing us for the place which He is preparing above; working in our own souls that character which will give us our eternal peculiarity, an individual position and work, and glory in the kingdom above, where one saint shall differ from another, "even as one star differeth from another in glory." This is our hope, our patience, our encouragement. And this expectation deepens our knowledge of Christ crucified. By the crown as well as the cross we are separated from sin, the world, and the flesh. What might appear great gain and progress to those whose horizon is bounded by the present dispensation, cannot satisfy him who lives and labours for the everlasting harvest; who looks forward to that fire, in which only gold, silver and precious stones shall be found approved. He knows that no victory is true and real except it be won by Christ's love and spirit; he seeks to go out with joy, and to be led forth with peace by the

world-despised power of Christ's death, that it may be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign, that will not be cut off.

And now, brethren, the sum and substance of it: Jesus Christ is always the one essential, divine, all-glorious Person whom we need. The burden of our sin and need does not become lighter; but, as in the legend of Christophorus, the weight increases, and we feel: Christ is all; apart from Him we are and can do nothing.

But if Christ is all to us, we are truly blessed. Duties and attainments, good works and sweet frames of mind, if they keep us from Christ and "the sense of His expiring love," are evils; whereas our sins and failures, our sorrows and temptations, like tempests may drive us off from ourselves on the Rock, Christ. "A Christian never wants comfort, but by breaking the order and method of the Gospel, looking on his own and looking off from Christ's perfect righteousness."

You remain dependent on His grace. Would you have it otherwise? And when you are depressed on account of your sins and failings, is there no secret lurking tendency to make a Christ of sanctification; to set it up as a source of comfort; to trust in it as an idol? Remember, that it is a joyous thing, to be "a debtor to mercy alone," to depend on the Lord Jesus Christ: to be at the Lord's Supper.

For it is a feast, a festival; here is true rejoicing. The people of the world, whenever they rejoice, or give a festival, banish two thoughts from their

minds: that we are sinners, and that we must die. What a strange thing it would be thought by the world if there was announced a great festival of rejoicing, and if the two prominent ideas of this festival were to be sin and death. When we come to rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ, the two prominent ideas are sin and death. But our sin is forgiven, and our death is swallowed up in victory. Jesus is our righteousness, and Jesus is our life. His joy is thus ours, as He saith: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."

There is plentiful redemption
In the Blood that has been shed;
There is joy for all the members
In the sorrows of the Head.

'Tis not all we owe to Jesus;
It is something more than all;
Greater good because of evil,
Larger mercy through the fall.

If our love were but more simple,
We should take Him at his word,
And our lives would be all sunshine
In the sweetness of our Lord.

LECTURE IV.

IN JESUS CHRIST CRUCIFIED MEET TWO ETERNITIES.

"We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." —1 Cor. ii. 7.

Two eternities meet in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, the everlasting counsel of God and the never-ending blessedness and glory of the redeemed. And how wonderful is it, that they should meet just there, where the chief of sinners sees the door of mercy wide open, and where the humble, the poor in spirit, the lowly, who have no hope and no refuge, find the Father's infinite love welcoming them and giving them his salvation!

At all times those who were in communion with God breathed the atmosphere of eternity. They, who knew that Jehovah was their God, knew that God was not a God of the dead but of the living. Their views of the grave and of the resurrection

may have been defective and dark, but to pray, to believe, to love God is to live the eternal life. This was their consolation—that the Lord, who had been the dwelling-place of His people in all generations, from everlasting to everlasting was God. This was their firm support—that whereas man was but as the flower of the field, which to-day flourisheth and to-morrow is cast into the oven, the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him. And yet it is in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that life and immortality, that eternity was brought to light. In the manifestation of the everlasting Son of God, there is given unto us a clearer insight into eternity, both the eternity "before the world was" and the eternity towards which we are looking.

God has written eternity into the heart of every human being. No child needs an exposition of the word "for ever." Nothing that is time-born will satisfy our souls. Our hearts are greater than that which is finite, and, therefore, the world is not able to satisfy them. "God is greater than our hearts," and therefore through all eternity we shall find in God our sure portion and our exceeding great reward.

1. Let us look at the Lord Jesus Christ crucified, and see in Him the revelation and fulfilment of the eternal counsel of God.

Regarding the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ as an historical event we would say that it was man who crucified Him; and in saying so we should be

perfectly correct. It was man's doing: it was essentially the free will of man that nailed Jesus unto the cross. Jesus came unto His people Israel, and in power showed that He was sent from God. Jesus came unto the people of Israel, and in love showed, that His heart was filled with intense desire for their salvation. Jesus came unto the people of Israel, and, in great condescension, meekness, and wisdom, adapted Himself to their every need, and to their every weakness, as He Himself says, "How often would I have gathered thy children: but ye would not." When Israel rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, when the Pharisees and the High Priests took counsel together, when they resolved and arranged that Jesus Christ was to be put to death, and when, finally, with cruel hands they nailed Him to the tree, surely it was their own doing; it was the carrying out of their own inmost desire and wish. "Ye would not." Man's will is always opposed to his own salvation. The will of man is, indeed, free, but in its freedom is always directed against God. See in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, how Herod and Pilate, how the Jews and the Gentiles, how the learned and the ignorant, how the religious and the profligate, how *man*, in the freedom of his will, rejected the Lord of Glory, the Lord of infinite love. Oh, it is a sad thing that the will of man would not, and will not, receive the Lord Jesus! Very pathetic is it to my mind, when our blessed Saviour says, "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of *men*." Oh, how safe He

ought to have been in the hands of men! He, who took upon Him our nature, and went about doing good continually—how safely ought He to have rested in the hands of men. Every one that bears the nature of man, and all that is in man, ought to have loved Him who is "the Man Christ Jesus." The poor, the rich, those who knew the Word of God, those who were ignorant and whom He taught, all ought to have loved Him. There was nothing in the Lord Jesus Christ to call forth opposition. Surely He was hated without cause. The saints of God were always hated by the world; from righteous Abel to the end of time there is enmity against the godly seed. But the servants of God are all imperfect, and, therefore, there is always something in their character and lives that is not absolutely lovable, and sometimes that which is evil and sinful. Even Moses, the man of God, was not able to rise to the full conception of God's forgiving love, and did not perfectly sanctify the name of God before the people. (Numbers xx.) But in Jesus Christ there was nothing, even in His manner, that was not absolutely worthy of love. His tone of voice, His silence, His every step and gesture, manifested that He was meek and lowly in heart, that His nature was love, that He would not break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax. Yet, when He was delivered into the hands of men, alas! the hands of men crucified Him.

Here we behold the real nature of sin, enmity against God. But here we behold also the purpose

of God. Thus Jesus regarded it. Here is one greater than that Joseph, who said unto his brethren: "Your thoughts concerning me were evil, but above you was God; He has so ordered it, that I may become the source of good unto you." The Lord Jesus from the beginning knew, that He was to go up to Jerusalem to be rejected of men, to be crucified. "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of men, and they shall spit upon him." Down to the very minutest detail of the ignominy and of the hatred, that was to be poured upon Him, Christ foresaw the cross. He knew that it was the Father's will. "Thus it was written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer." It had been foretold in the Scriptures; it was the counsel of God. Judas, according to his own will, betrayed Him, but it was written, "He that eateth bread with me shall lift up his heel against me." Judas sold Him for thirty pieces of silver; so they agreed together; but it was written that for thirty pieces of silver the Great Shepherd was to be sold. The disciples in that night of terror and agony were not bold and strong enough to suffer and to be faithful. That was the weakness of their heart, but it was written, "I will smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered." Unto the cross men brought him; that was their own doing; but though according to the accusation of blasphemy Jesus ought to have been stoned; it must needs be fulfilled what was written, that he was to be lifted up. The death of crucifixion was agreed upon

by Jews and by Romans; but it was written that the Lord Jesus Christ as the Paschal Lamb, and in fulfilment of the type of the brazen serpent, was to be exposed publicly, it was predicted that he was to be placed between two malefactors, that His hands and side were to be pierced, that His blood was to be shed, that not a bone of His body was to be broken, that slowly and painfully He was to suffer the penalty for our sin; and no other mode of putting to death would have fulfilled all the necessary elements of the prediction. Therefore it must have happened so. Jesus was upon the cross, and now was fulfilled, what David—who, in his limited finite measure, prefigured in his experience the suffering of Messiah—wrote in the twenty-second Psalm, a psalm evidently in the mind of Jesus both during His crucifixion and on the morning of the resurrection.* When He was upon the cross, He remembered all the counsel of God, and that it was written, that He was to be forsaken of God, and that they would give Him gall and vinegar to drink. And when all was fulfilled, after He had said, "I thirst," He was able to exclaim, "It is finished." It was man's will that crucified Him, but it was God's will, God's appointment, or as the Apostle Peter said unto the Jews, "You with cruel hands have put Him to death, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."

Men crucified Christ, because so they would.

* Psalm xxii. especially v. 1, 6—8, 16—18. Compare also v. 22 with John xx. 17.

God had determined it from all eternity. Here are necessity and liberty in the central fact of the world's history.

But when had God determined that Jesus was to be crucified? The suffering Messiah was in the mind of God during all the time of Israel's history; for not merely are there those isolated passages which I have now referred to, in which the sufferings and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ have been most minutely foretold, as in an anticipated photograph, but the very institutions and types which God gave unto His people, and the whole framework of prophecy have inwoven into them, in a way which makes it impossible to eliminate it, the red, the scarlet thread; everywhere we behold the blood of atonement. You must change all the festivals, all the sacrifices, all the Levitical institutions, nay, the whole history of the Jews, if you remove the fundamental facts of the Paschal Lamb, the true Isaac, Joseph and David, if you omit the central truth, salvation by substitution, by the righteousness and sufferings of the servant of God, the true Israel.

The national history of Israel begins with the Exodus, and the centre of the Exodus is the Paschal Lamb. The root of Israel is Abraham; and he was chosen, that in Isaac, the promised seed, all nations should be blessed. On Mount Moriah Abraham beheld the sacrifice of the Only-begotten of the Father, he saw the day of Christ crucified.

Tracing back the history of God's dealings with

men, we behold Abel, the first who entered the realm of eternity. He offered a better sacrifice, and was accepted. It was better, because it had the element of substitution, the shedding of blood. And at the very commencement of human history God revealed redemption through a suffering Saviour. Thus Christ crucified was in the mind of God; His goings forth were from Abraham, from Adam, from the beginning of the world.

But we must go further back. Think of creation. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever He formed the earth, there was with Him the everlasting wisdom, the Son of His love, the word of His power; by Him all things are made. He is the beginning of the creation of God—the Alpha in whom God thought of creation, and in whom God carried out His design. Even then He was, in the divine mind, God and man in one person, the Saviour of sinners. Christ was set up from everlasting; and Christ, we are taught in Scripture, as the Lamb slain; for it was God's purpose that the Son of God, taking upon Him human nature, should be at once the climax and Head of all creation, as well as the perfect revelation of God.

And, therefore, we find that the whole creation was made with an express leaning towards the crucifixion of Jesus Christ; that spiritual truths which are fulfilled and manifested in Him, are shewn forth in all the works of God. The sun that is in the heavens, and which brings light, and life, and warmth, is but the symbol of that everlasting Sun

of Righteousness which, with the light of the glad tidings of salvation shines into our dark hearts. The light diffused through space was concentrated in the sun, so the Word, by whom all things were made, was made flesh and tabernacled with us, and is the light of the world—the light of life. Look at your own body; look at every plant; look at every living organism. It shows forth the mystery of Christ and the Church where many various parts which in themselves have no life, are knit together in a corporate unity, animated by an indwelling but invisible Spirit, who gives them wisdom and strength.

In all the realms of God's kingdom, from the lowest to the highest, we see symbols of Christ. In the lowest we have Christ represented by the *Stone*, the Rock—the emblem of strength, of firmness, of never-changing stability; the foundation which cannot be moved. But He is also like the Plant. His is life, even as He gives life. He is therefore called the Branch (or Zemach), simply and most generally representing the idea of organic life. And this in its highest and noblest form, for He is the *Vine;* and in its loveliest and most beauteous manifestation, for He is the *Rose.* But He is symboled forth in a higher kingdom than that of plants. He is strong and royal as a Lion; He is meek and gentle, attractive and patient, "made for suffering," like a Lamb. But yet higher we rise. He is called "the Son of Man;" for whatsoever is truly human (according to the idea of God)—wisdom and love,

strength of purpose and gentleness of submission, concentration in God and expansive benevolence to all, work and energy, and meditative rest and festive Sabbath,—all that is truly man finds in Him its perfect exponent and fulfilment. Everywhere we see Jesus Christ prefigured; and not merely Jesus Christ, but also the mystery of suffering and of death, as the Lord Jesus teaches us from the corn of wheat. In creation, as it was in Christ and for Christ, the Lamb of God was in the mind of the Father. Therefore, from the beginning, the cross of the Lord Jesus was in the purpose of God.

But, if in creation, then before creation. "The hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world." It is only by faith that our minds can take the step from "the world" to "before the world."* The Scripture reveals God's eternal counsel. In the case of Christ's crucifixion, where the sinful will of man in its intense opposition to God, and in

* No philosopher, either of antiquity or of modern times, has been able to construct out of his own thought—from the necessary laws of thought and consciousness—the revealed thought: creation. As it requires faith to see that Jesus is the Redeemer, so faith only sees God as the Creator. The world may have appropriated the Church's wisdom—it does not fit in, however, into "man's wisdom," and is therefore, gradually rejected. The Church of all ages—not philosophy—has declared: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth," as it is written: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." God called forth things which are seen out of things which do not appear. "What is meant by that which does not appear, of which were made the things that are seen? Not pure nothing, of which we can form no conception,

its connexion with the power of darkness, meets with the infinite and omnipotent love and wisdom of God, we see in the most striking manner how the sin of man and the determinate counsel of God co-exist, though we cannot harmonize the two opposite lines of truth. We know that there are the decrees of God according to which from all eternity He hath fore-ordained all things, and that all decrees of God are comprised and centre in the person and work of the Incarnate Son. God has many decrees; God has only one purpose: to manifest Himself, to show forth His glory, to reveal His perfections, and to show them forth in His only-begotten and well-beloved Son, and in Him as in Jesus Christ crucified. The Lamb of God was slain, the Apostle Peter tells us, before the foundation of the world. Redemption is no afterthought in God: it is His first thought; and according to the Lamb that was slain all things were made. He is the centre of creation; He is the centre of history or providence; He is the centre of redemption; He is the centre of glory. Christ was the Alpha in the mind of God, as well as the Omega.

and out of which indeed nothing can come; but, on the contrary, something so great and sublime, that it transcends all our thoughts. As Thomas Aquinas teaches, before the creative fiat went forth, 'that which does not appear' existed in the thoughts and ideal views, in the eternal Word or Logos of God. For as God knows and thinks Himself as the Eternal and Infinite, He sees also the finite non-eternal, which can only be realized by His will and Power."—*Veith, Anfänge der Menschenwelt*, 28.

In the Epistles to the Colossians and to the Hebrews, the Apostle speaks of the glory of Jesus Christ the Son of God incarnate. He says of Him, that He is the image of the invisible God, the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person. In Him it was God's purpose, to be seen, known and worshipped. Idolatry changes the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man. God has given us an Image, a revelation of Himself, an Image which has glory, reality and life; and the question which in the prophet Isaiah is so often addressed to idolatrous men: "To whom then will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?"—finds its true solution in the contrast of God's self-manifestation in His Son. In the face of Jesus Christ we behold the glory of God. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) In Him the light of God shines unto all creation as a light of peace.

Hence, all true worship of the Father is in Christ. Outside Israel and the Church, men know not whom they worship, for only where salvation is — God in Christ — is true spiritual adoration. (John iv. 22—24.) Idolatry—the substitution of a man-invented and shadowy image for the God-given substantial and eternal Image—appears in endless varieties from the grosser form of four-footed beasts to the most refined, intellectual and æsthetic systems of modern thought. Idolatry is manifold; worship is only one; only one Tabernacle, only one Temple existed at any time in Israel, even as

there is only one Christ, in whom God is known and worshipped.*

When Jesus says, I am the way, He announces the most comprehensive truth; he gives the key of all creation and history. Jesus is not only God's way to the sinner, but, in the most absolute sense of the word, He is the way of God. When God the Infinite, who in Himself is perfect and blessed, passes out of Himself into manifestation by creation or redemption, His way is Christ. Hence all things, visible and invisible, were created by Him. He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

The Lord Jesus Christ was appointed in the eternal purpose to be the Heir of all things, as Head of the Church. Hence the intimate connection between His resurrection and His Inheritance. Thus the Apostle writes to the Ephesians: "God's mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places . . . . and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church." Likewise to the Colossians, after speaking of Christ as the image of the invisible God, by whom all things were made, and who is before all things; He adds, "and He is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead."

* Compare 1 John v. 20. 21. His Son Jesus Christ; this is *the true God* and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from *idols*. Amen.

And this leads us to the union between Christ and the Church. God beheld Christ as Head of the Body. When the Father, according to the good pleasure of His will, with the free accord and consent of the Son and the delight of the Holy Ghost, appointed Him to be Jesus Christ crucified, heir of all things, Lord of all, image of the Invisible, head and consummation of all the creation of God, then He appointed us also in Christ Jesus. We are chosen in Christ. In Him we are redeemed, in Him we are adopted and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. God has given us eternal life in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world was laid.

Look at it in another light, in which it is easier for us to realise this great truth. We look away from eternity, and consider the dealings of God with man in time. First, with man in innocence, purity and happiness—man placed in the most favourable circumstances in the garden of Eden, surrounded with everything that was attractive, prosperous, and beautiful. God tried him—man fell. According to man's thought, the fall would have been the end; communion between God and man would have ceased; but God in His wonderful wisdom and grace continues. God deals now with fallen man without law. What is the consequence? Man becomes so wicked that it was necessary for God to destroy the whole race. He sends the flood. Now, we think again we have arrived at an end. God continues. He takes out

Noah, according to His own sovereignty and goodness, to begin a new dispensation. This is again brought to conclusion by the rebellion of men at Babel. God deals now with Israel; not with humanity at large, but He selects one family of the race, and encloses them as His garden. Good and loving to all, He is specially gracious and favourable to this chosen people. He gives them His law, which is holy, and just and good; His commandments, which are full of peace and light; His beautiful precepts and statutes, promises and encouragements, His manifold and great blessings. What is the consequence? They reject the prophets; they stone and kill those that are sent unto them. God still continues in His patience and long-suffering love. He sends unto them His own Son. "Peradventure they will reverence my Son." What greater love could God show? God comes unto them in the greatest love, in the greatest kindness, in the greatest meekness, in the greatest beauty. What more lovely, more attractive than Jesus? What sweeter than His words? What more blessed than His acts? Yet Israel received Him not; they reject, they crucify Jesus. Surely now has the awful end at last arrived. Can you show any way out of this climax of Israel's failure and sin—any escape? God deals with man in time according to responsibility. Dealing with man in perfect kindness, truth, love, patience, faithfulness—we find the more God reveals Himself in love, the more man reveals his sinfulness and

opposition to God. Both the law and the Gospel bring out man's evil. The greater love God manifests, the greater is the opposition of man; till at last, when He Himself comes in the person of His Son, men hate Him and do unto Him the worst they can. For how could hatred be more bitter, more fierce, more profound, than that hatred which nailed Him to the cross, preferring to Him Barabbas, who was a robber, crucifying Him as an outcast, one that is not worthy to live upon the earth, or to die within the camp, within the beloved city. They nail Him upon the accursed tree. Surely man's sin has abounded unto death. He has destroyed himself. There is no way of escape except one. God can retreat into His own sovereignty: He can say—"Although everything has failed, and although they are full of sin and rebelliousness against me, I can go back into my eternal counsel. I will not deal with them according to their works, but I will deal with them according to my infinite love which I have purposed in myself before they were yet called into existence—before the foundations of the world were laid." And when Israel thus rebelled against him in the wilderness, God went back into the recesses of His will, and said—"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy;" or, again, "for my own name's sake will I do this;" or, as it is expressed in the New Testament—"in Christ." "According to the promise of life which God gave us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—And thus "grace," and "election of grace," are

only two expressions of the same thing. There is no consolation except in that eternal counsel of God—in that purpose which He purposed in Himself when Jesus was appointed Saviour of the lost.* As Staupitz frequently wrote to Martin Luther, when the earnest Augustinian was greatly troubled and overwhelmed with the thought of the eternal predestination and sovereignty of God:—"Brother Martin, in the wounds of Jesus Christ upon the cross you must read your election." Christ crucified for the guilty—this alone is music in the ear of a poor sinner. "I will have *mercy* upon whom I will have mercy."

II. Now let us look, for a moment, at the glory to which we are predestined.

As we have been chosen in Christ before the beginning of the world; as we have been upon Christ

* The Apostles frequently show unto us the connexion between salvation by grace and the eternal counsel of God. The law and man's transgression are connected with time; grace and eternal life are traced to the promise before the world began. Thus the Apostle Paul speaks of the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, of the hope of eternal life, which God promised before the world began; and in his Epistle to the Ephesians, entirely omitting the parenthesis of man's trangression of law, shows our position in Christ, as having its source in the eternity "before the foundation of the world." Thus the Apostle John also, from a different point of view, declares that eternal life was with the Father and was manifested unto us. The believer, therefore, must look away from all that is earthly, changing, and imperfect, from the law and man's failure, from all that is in time, to God and his eternal love in Christ Jesus. The Gospel is connected with the unchangeable nature of God, with his counsels and promises, which are from everlasting.

when He died upon the cross; as we were quickened together with Christ when He rose from the dead, so we shall be glorified together with Christ, when Christ who is our life shall appear. "Thine is the glory" we say in the prayer which Christ has taught us. Christ and the Father are one. The glory of the Father and the glory of Jesus are inseparable. God says, "I will not give my glory to another, and my honour to a graven image;" but this is no graven image; this is the true image of the invisible God; and this is not another, because He and the Father are one. Christ had glory with the Father before the world was. When He became man, He glorified the Father upon earth, and after His obedience unto death, the Father glorified His holy child Jesus. How marvellous is His death on the cross, when we remember His eternal Godhead and glory, how blessed and comforting His present exaltation, when we see it as the fruit of His cross! Thus we are taught in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The bridge between the premundane glory of the Son of God and His present exaltation is His condescension and love in His death, "when He by Himself purged our sins!" He came from glory to wash away our defilement, and by His own blood He entered into the Holy of Holies.

"He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied;" the purpose which was set before Him by the Father, and which He set before Himself in His incarnation and death, shall be fully attained. He shall have repose and joy in beholding, that the

result of His suffering is perfect and commensurate with the price He paid, the infinite agony He endured upon the cross. In His resurrection and ascension, He saw the beginning of the joy set before Him, that in His humanity He should be exalted, and that to Him, as Man, all things should be made subject. In the ingathering of souls for the last eighteen hundred years, He has seen His reward being gradually fulfilled. But that is not all the travail of His soul. When the whole Church shall be gathered; when all the children of God from among all the nations of the earth shall be brought together; when the whole body shall be perfect, and every single one of the members, which in continuance, one after another, are fashioned before God,* shall be brought out in glory and perfection; then shall He rejoice in the reward the Father has given unto Him; then shall He be satisfied. Only think of the Church of Christ, without spot or blemish or wrinkle, without sin or defilement or weakness;—not merely that, but perfect, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, clothed with divine righteousness, filled with the love of the Father and the fruit of the Spirit, reflecting the image of Jesus, the first-born among many brethren;—not merely that, but complete, that is to say, all the thoughts of God realized in that wonderful multitude which no man can number, where every member has a different position, a different function, a different perfection; and yet all of them so united,

* Ps. cxxxix.

so blended, so harmonious, under one control, under one mind; that Jesus will possess the myriads of believers, even as you possess all the members of your body; that whatever He thinks, they will execute; whatever is in His mind, to that there will be an immediate response, according to the various proportion of the gift which God has bestowed upon them. They will be one in love, in thought, in action, even as the Father and the Son are one, Christ in them and the Father in Christ. This will be the wonderful body which God has prepared for Jesus. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied."

And just as the sun is appointed in the firmament that all the light which is scattered abroad should be concentrated in one point, from which it should radiate forth unto the creation of God, so shall be that body of the Lord Jesus Christ the centre of light and influence of government and rule to angels, to powers and principalities above, to the nations upon the earth, to the beasts and fowls, to the trees and the mountains and the fields;* to everything in its own proper sphere—some without consciousness, some only with instinct, some with intelligence, some in the image of God—all showing

* Even that, which was not separated from God through the fall and sin, but stood as creature in creaturely distance from God, has been brought nearer to Godhead through a Mediator, who is both Creator and Creature, who, as the Word made flesh, is the First, the Head of Creation. . . . Now the heavenly sun shines on all Creation through the transfigured humanity of Christ."—P. M. Hahn, *Colosser*, 48.

forth the mind and the purpose of God; all harmonized, all in peace and rest, all penetrated by one will and serving one grand object. When Christ and the Church shall sit on the "Prepared Throne" and God's Kingdom shall rule over all, (Ps. ciii. 19), when all things shall be ours, and we Christ's, and Christ God's; then "shall He see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." "As I live, saith the Lord, the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." The whole creation is groaning in bondage and waiting for the fulfilment of this counsel of God "before the world unto our glory;" the manifestation of the sons of God.

The source of the glory is Jesus Christ crucified. When He said "It is finished" two eternities met; there was revealed and accomplished the counsel of God, and there was purchased and secured the glory of His chosen people. Thus the preaching of Christ crucified is central and comprehensive. It announces the Spirit-revealed wisdom of God. The Apostle calls it the hidden wisdom of God, because here all divine attributes are acting together in harmony; because no created finite intelligence could have conceived this vast, this infinite plan; because the means which He adapts unto the accomplishment of this purpose are so wonderful and so manifold; because when all created beings could devise no remedy or escape, God takes the very thing which opposes Him, and makes it a channel of His power and of His grace.

Sin, which introduces death into the world, becomes the occasion of the heart of God being unveiled. The disobedience of Adam, which apparently is the triumph of Satan, introduces the promise of the great victory of righteousness and of truth. Israel's unbelief and rejection of the Messiah bring in the fulness of the Gentiles. Oh, what a God is ours! No darkness but it becomes light; no evil but it becomes the occasion of God revealing and giving higher blessings. Oh, the depth of the wisdom of the knowledge and understanding of God!

"The *hidden* wisdom." It was hidden in God from all eternity. He revealed it, so freely! so fully! so simply! At first in a fragmentary and elementary way, through types and symbols, and gradual teaching of word and history, and then clearly and with great simplicity in the Gospel. Why, then, is it called the hidden wisdom of God? When God reveals Himself He does it in such a way that darkness and mystery increase with every new revelation that He gives of Himself. I cannot understand God in eternity. Behold, God sends light! God is Triune—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Therefore, God never was alone: there was always life, and love, and blessedness within God. It is light; but when I look at the light I cannot understand it. The mystery of the Trinity brings light, yet brings with it still greater depths which cannot be fathomed. Man falls—all men in one man. It is dark: I cannot understand it. God brings light. "As by the

disobedience of one man many were constituted sinners, so, by the obedience of one, many are made righteous."* There is light and consolation, but again by a new mystery—Christ and the thousands and millions both before Him and after Him, who believe in Him, united into one, so that they died in Him, and are raised in His resurrection. Hidden is this wisdom, because, whenever God shows more of Himself, who is the only source of light, we feel that God dwells in light which is unapproachable and full of glory. Wherefore the prophet exclaims, "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself"—not in cruelty, not in reticence, not in silence. No, the more God reveals Himself, the more mysterious and incomprehensible is God; and throughout all eternity God will be infinitely mysterious to us—a wonderful God whom no man can search or find out. He hides Himself in order that believers may be filled with humility; He reveals Himself in order that believers may be filled with joy; He hides Himself in order that the pride and stubbornness of human reason may be humbled; He hides Himself, yet so that those who do not believe are left without excuse. His revelations are a light, come for judgment, separating the proud and humble, the world and the contrite.

* There is an ancient Jewish saying: "The mystery of Adam is the mystery of the Messiah." Bengel writes: "I like to realize in my spiritual exercises two moments: The one, when through Adam I became a sinner, and the other, when Jesus committed His spirit into His Father's hands, and thereby reconciled me with God and brought me to Him."

The child of God can rejoice in that word "Hidden." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." And again, it is written, "Thou desirest truth in the inward part, and in the hidden part thou wilt make me know wisdom." The hidden wisdom is revealed in the hidden part, —where God alone can enter, that inmost centre of your life, into which light can come only from above. No human teacher can give it you. Oh, that the Lord may enlighten the eyes of our hearts, that we may know Him!

But is there one, who is seeking Jesus, and feels discouraged by the thought of God's sovereignty? Unto him I would say, there is nothing between you and Jesus. Jesus is *your* encouragement, even as election is *Christ's* encouragement. (John vi. 37; Matt. xi. 25—30.) See only the open arms of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Think not of Christ as a citadel, a fortress, which is built upon a rock, inaccessible; here is a sheepfold, with a low and open door, for any poor lost sheep to enter—Jesus himself is the door. "I am the door. By me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go out and in, and find pasture." Enter in and find in the election of God your great consolation and your great help. The universal invitations of Scripture are of the greatest importance to us,— "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but that he should turn;" or "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son." But remember, though

the arms of God are open, you are not thereby safe. It is when the arms of God are not open, but when they are enclosing you,—when you are grasped in those strong and loving arms of the Father,—when you have run into them,—it is then that you are safe. When God says, "As I live I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner," He assures us that His benevolence and love will not exclude any; but, as we have seen already, man rejects the universal benevolence and the open love of God. When God Himself came down in the person of His Son Jesus Christ, man nailed Him to the accursed tree. Therefore, you need something over and beyond the general promise. . . "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with everlasting kindness have I drawn thee!" "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." "I, when I am lifted up, will draw all unto myself." It is then that, running into the arms of God, you are clasped in His embrace. "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son"—not "that all the world should be saved," but, "that every one that believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Let all your thoughts be directed to Him. Here is an open door—a Saviour who died, "the just for the unjust." Believe and you have eternal life.

And, lastly, dear believers, what is our position, standing between the glory of the past and the glory of the future, and seeing that glory only in Jesus

Christ crucified? For I would most earnestly beseech you to remember that, if you think of the eternal counsel, or if you think of the eternal glory, apart from Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and your interest as poor perishing sinners in Him, all your speculations and all your exalted feelings will be of no avail, and will have no solid foundation. Let us meditate on deep truths, not to lose ourselves in a dreamy speculation of the grand and incomprehensible realities of eternity, not merely to be elevated by the hope of a life of holy activity, stretching far beyond the present transitory scene; but that we may *in the present* have communion with God, and possess the mind and spirit of Jesus, whom we must follow in His humility and obedience, if we are to receive His reward and be partakers of His glory. What are we to think, then? and what is to be our attitude in the present life? Remember what Jesus did. We are told that, having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them to the end; and remembering that all things were given unto Him by the Father, and that He was come from God, and that He was going to God—Jesus, remembering that He was the Heir of all things, and that He came out of eternal glory, and that He was going to eternal glory, what did He do? In the remembrance of His majesty and His glory, what did He do? He rose from supper, and girded Himself, and took a basin, and washed His disciples' feet! The remembrance of His past glory, the prospect of His future

glory, what did they result in? Jesus washing His disciples' feet! And this is what we ought to do. If God has chosen us, and if we are going forward unto glory, oh, let us learn the mystery of love! Let us be like Jesus, meek and lowly in heart: let us lay down our lives for the brethren, not merely by dying once, whereunto God may not have called us, but by giving up all our daily life—all the arrangements of our life—by sacrificing our tastes, and our peculiarities, and everything that we have, and making life subservient to the good of the Church, and the welfare of the brethren. Let us learn the mystery of glory—Christ's love: love that denies itself; love which seeketh not her own; love which, like Jesus, comes not to be ministered unto, but to minister unto others; love which is not discouraged and weakened by the sins and failings of God's saints, but which is ever ready to bear the infirmities of the weak and ever rejoicing, to hide a multitude of sins by converting a brother from the error of his way. Let us learn to suffer with Jesus that we may be glorified with Him.

"Must Simon* bear the cross alone,
And all the rest go free?
No, there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me.
The consecrated cross I'll bear
Till Christ shall set me free,
And then go home, a crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me."

Amen!

* Matt. xxvii. 32.

LECTURE V.

NECESSITY OF THE SPIRIT'S REVELATION.

"But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9—10.

Salvation is of God and in Christ Jesus. It has its source in the eternal love of the Father, and it is given unto us by the grace of our Lord and Saviour. The Father blesses us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, and the blessings are in Christ. It pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell in Him, that we may be complete in the Son of His love.

Salvation is of the Father in Christ; but as the God of our salvation is Father, Son, and Spirit, so the salvation of our God consists not only in the love of God and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, but also in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. The name of God is Father, Son, and Spirit; and hence it is impossible for us to know the Father, and Him

whom He has sent, without the influence and power of that Spirit, who is equal with the Father and Son in glory and majesty. It is true, that Christ is the light of the world; but it is equally true that, only in the light of God—that is, in the Spirit—are we able to see God's light. The Father has given in Christ a perfect revelation of Himself; but even this bright manifestation is darkness unto us unless the Spirit glorify Christ. It is true that whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, and that His name, even Father, has been declared to us by His Son; but no man can call Jesus Lord save by the Holy Ghost, and only by the spirit of adoption can we say "Abba."

It is experience, as well as Scripture, that has taught the Church the mystery of the Trinity. Here is not a theoretic doctrine, abstract and speculative, but here is knowledge, which is the result of spiritual life, given by God to His children. "I believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," is the confession, the experience, and the comfort of the Church. We know that we are a new creation in Christ Jesus, that we have been born again, that we have been transplanted into the kingdom of God's grace; and we know that this new birth, this new creation, was not effected by the influence or power of man, nor by our own reason, will, and energy. We know that it is by the Spirit of God that our hearts were changed and our souls renewed; it is the Spirit who has given unto us the saving knowledge of the Father and the Son.

Hence our knowledge has a character of certainty, conviction and assurance, which no other knowledge possesses. The Spirit, who has revealed to us Christ, is infinite in wisdom; He is divine, infallible and full of love. The light which has entered our hearts proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Hence also the vitality of our knowledge. The Spirit is like a well of living water within us, springing up unto eternal life. Our knowledge is in faith, love and prayer; it is life before and with the Father and the Son, it is continually vitalized by the Spirit of life, the Holy Ghost.

And here also is our consolation. There are times of darkness, doubt and fear, when the believer's anxious thought is the momentous question: "Am I Christ's or not?" There is no other way of escape out of the labyrinthine mazes of self-examination and introspection, but the witness of the Holy Ghost, who is above us and within us, who bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God, and brings us the full assurance that Christ is our Saviour, and God our Father.

The Spirit of God gives us a certain, a vital, a joyous knowledge.

But why is the teaching of the Spirit necessary?

Christ revealed the Father. He "declared" Him. The words and works of Jesus, His character and life, His sufferings and death manifested the Father fully, perfectly and clearly. All that was

in the Godhead was revealed, it was woven and wrought into sinless and perfect humanity, so that the essential, eternal life and love which are in God, appeared unto mankind in Christ. (1 John i.)

But Christ was rejected. The princes of this world crucified the Lord of glory. It was not the ignorance and folly of the world that rejected the Messiah; not the uncivilized barbarians, but Greeks and Romans; human culture in its highest and noblest aspect. "The Apostle views the men who were immediately concerned in the crucifixion of Christ as representatives of the spirit of the world, as it appears also in Hellenic philosophy; they acted in the name and spirit of the antique world."* To the wisdom of the world Christ crucified appeared foolishness.

It was not the immorality, the wickedness, the frivolity of the world that rejected Christ. While the degraded and the profligate were striving into the kingdom of God, and drawing near to listen to the holy Friend of Sinners, the religion, the piety, the theology of the world accused the Lord of blasphemy, and rejected His testimony of truth and love. The wisdom and the piety of the world could discern no beauty and perfection in Christ Jesus, in whom the divine glory shone so brightly. The Spirit of the world cannot see Christ; it is necessary that the Spirit of God should descend,

* Neander.

to open human eyes and hearts to behold the Sun of Righteousness.

But the Spirit is needed by man, not merely because man is sinful and fallen. The Spirit is God, even as the Father and the Son, and hence man always and necessarily depends on the Holy Ghost. Man's dependence on the Triune God—and there is no other God—is man's glory and dignity. It is not his weakness. Man is elevated by his *wants*, not his powers; not by the development of all that is within him, but by his leaning on God and drawing out of His fulness. Created in the image of God, he is to have communion with Infinite Wisdom, Love, Strength. Man is not sufficient in or to himself. It is not enough for him to say: "I am and do all that is human," but "I can do all things through God, who has created me in His image, and for Himself."

God created man in His image. We are His offspring. Of Adam it is said in the Gospel of Luke, he is of God. Man was created to have fellowship with God, to behold His light, and to be filled with His love and holiness. Hence the eye of man is not merely light-receptive, but has also light-nature; the eye is the light of the body. The heart is not merely able to respond to the love of God, but God Himself lives and manifests Himself in our souls.

Man, according to the purpose of God and the very constitution of his nature, cannot come to rest, to the consciousness of fulfilling the end and object

of his existence and the law of his being, unless he lives with God, leaning on Him, and continually receiving from Him vitalizing influences of love, light and joy.

Created by God in His image, to live by and for God, he cannot be true man unless he lives *in* God. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. The atmosphere of our mental and moral existence is heavenly, and not earthly; our springs are in God. Adam, before the fall, said: "I live, yet not I. The life which I live is in constant dependence on Him, who in love created me in His image, and unto the perfect attainment of His image."

God manifested Himself in Paradise in the works of creation. The heavens declared the glory of God. All his works praise Him. As in a mirror, the perfections of God are reflected in creation. God revealed Himself to Adam in his reason. Reason is generally viewed in its lower aspect. Men ignore God in man's reason. They think chiefly of the power of reasoning, the process of ratiocination. But reason consists in those eternal mother ideas, which God himself has implanted. "There is nothing in the intellect originally except the intellect itself," that is, those mother ideas, primary, axiomatic, fundamental, which cannot be proved, which need not be proved, which are not gained by logical inference or deduction, but which we possess because God created us in His image.

But God's revelation through creation, reason and the heart,* does not supersede *His direct revelation of Himself by the Spirit.* Nay, without His Spirit, creation, reason and conscience do not reveal God. As Pascal observed: "Scripture assures us, that in every instance, when the beauty of creation manifests its Author, it is not from the simple contemplation of natural objects, but owing to a Divine illumination, which disposes the heart aright." "What is known of God is manifest in them, for *God* hath manifested it to them." (Rom.

* I cannot reach that by philosophy which God gives by inspiration. Faith in Himself seems to be due to the anointing of the Holy One. . . . . I often fear that, if we do not concede enough to the operation of the Holy Spirit in this matter, we will not do much for psychology either. . . . . And as for a logical proof of the Divine existence, I am convinced, that when the faith is more than parrotism and traditionalism, the Spirit of God has more to do with it than some orthodox divines are willing to admit.—Dr. Duncan, *Colloquia* 62. The escape from the prison-house of the Ego, is due to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit—*ibid.* 63. There are two revelations of God, both by the Spirit. One is man's Reason; (taking that word in its true sense—not the power of reasoning merely, or the narrow circle of thought of some portion of mankind), and Conscience; the other historical, as recorded in Scripture, and fulfilled in Christ. It is evident that the two are in harmony, but it is also evident, that the historical revelation not merely throws clearer light on what is seen by reason and conscience, but brings new disclosures, which are perfectly unattainable without it. It is dangerous to separate the historical from the primary revelation; it is virtually separating the Redeemer from the Creator. Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfil. He never ignores or undervalues the fundamental revelation in reason and conscience; he appeals to the "*sensus communis*," in which the Spirit of God testifies.

i. 19.) It is divine grace and power, it is God's Spirit, who in creation, reason and the heart testifies of God. As a father surrounds his children with pictures, models, diagrams, and all kinds of illustrations, not in order to be himself silent or to supersede his teaching, so God always remains the Instructor, the Source of light and knowledge. He speaks to us in many ways and through many channels; but *He* is the Word, and by His Spirit alone do we hear and understand.

Before the fall Adam saw light in God's light; by the Spirit, he knew the things of God. Through sin, man's heart was blinded and his understanding darkened. The human race branches off into two great sections—the region of direct supernatural Divine revelation, Israel, God's school; and the region of heathenism, darkness, and self-education. There is an experiment made on a gigantic scale. God left the Gentile nations to themselves; not absolutely,* for he left himself not without witness, sending them rain and fruitful seasons, if haply they might feel after Him; not absolutely,

*We speak of man's unassisted reason; but it never was unassisted. The expression is correct only in a relative and limited sense. There is not merely the action of the Holy Ghost on the heart and conscience; there are not merely the traces of our original condition, but there was the primeval revelation, which has left distinct marks in the traditions of antiquity. These agree in three important points. They speak of a past time of peace between heaven and earth, which was succeeded by a period of sin and misery, and they predict an age of reconciliation and restoration.

for rays of light visited them from Israel, and the Spirit of God had, doubtless, in ways unknown to us, His work in many hearts.* But, compared with Israel, the Gentiles were left to themselves during the times of ignorance, in order that it might be shown whether man, by his own reason, thought, experience, culture, with all the aids which God had given and left to man, could find out Truth and Knowledge. The experiment of the law was to show the true character of man's heart; the experiment of heathenism was to show the power of man's mind to discover God and Truth. The result of the law was the knowledge of sin; the result of man's search is the knowledge of ignorance. By the law comes the knowledge of sin; by philosophy, thought, research comes the knowledge of ignorance. Wisdom is a hidden thing. "Whence, then, cometh wisdom, and where is the place of understanding, seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living? Destruction and death say: We have heard the fame thereof with our ears: the depth says: It is not in me; and the sea saith: It is not with me." †

* The most remarkable instance is Socrates. How often and touchingly are we reminded in his teaching, character, and life, of the true wisdom and love. One of his sayings (*Plato, Timaeus*) is very striking. "God was good (in creation), but in one that is good there is never envy. Far from this, his desire was that all should be brought as near to himself as possible."

† Job 28. That man by searching cannot find out God, is a truth often dwelt on in Scripture. Compare Prov. xxx. 1-6, where the knowledge (name) of God and His Son is shown to be inaccessible to man, and the preciousness and all-sufficiency of the pure word of God pointed out.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. Here are mentioned three sources of knowledge, and all are insufficient. The eye or human observation, man's power of seeing and analysing; the ear, man's knowledge by tradition, the accumulated erudition of ages; the heart, man's intuitive power, the imagination and love of the immortal spirit within him. The eye hath seen many and wonderful things, it beholds things afar off, high above in the heavens, and things very near and yet distant by reason of their minuteness. And as the immensity of space is its territory, it penetrates into hidden depths, traces laws and structures, watches growths and developments, discovers method, harmony, symmetry, beauty, design in the works of God. The eye sees the Kosmos, the reign of Law, the beauty of organism, the sequence and logic of phenomena and events; but can it penetrate the veil of the created and behold the King in his beauty, and the land that is afar off?

The ear has heard and received much. The results of human research, experience and thought; proverbs, which like pebbles, round and smooth by the continual waves of experience and thought, from generation to generation, have attained greatest simplicity, terseness and brevity; the history recorded in the annals of nations, the wonderful systems and speculations of human sages. The ear has heard them. The primeval tradition, in

which revealed truths are distorted, mixed and overlaid with human error and imperfection, has brought to him as from a far distant shore mysterious sounds, indications of a higher knowledge. But ear has not heard the solution of those great problems which live in the heart of humanity. But greater than eye and ear, greater than observation and learning, is the intuition of the heart,* the imagination, the longing, the yearning love of an immortal spirit, imprisoned in darkness and sin. Who, but a king dethroned would ever be unhappy because his hand grasps no sceptre? And who but fallen man, created in God's image,

* Are mouldy records, then, the holy springs,
Whose healing waters still the thirst within?
Oh, never yet hath mortal drunk
A draught restorative,
That welled not from the depths of his own soul!
Goethe's *Faust.*

But also the confession:

The world of spirits no clouds conceal,
Man's eye is dim, it cannot see,
Man's heart is dead, it cannot feel.

And in the Easter morning scene, an acknowledgment that, in revelation and Christ's resurrection, the Light of Life visits the heart of man:

I cannot force myself into the spheres,
Where these good tidings of great joy are heard;
And yet, from youth familiar with the sounds,
Even now they call me back again to life.
Oh, once in boyhood's happy time, Heaven's love
Showered down upon me: then was the birth
Of a new life and a new world for me.

would feel hampered and hemmed in and fettered because he is the creature of time, and surrounded with things that perish, and because he cannot find anywhere "that Type of Perfect in his mind"? His misery bespeaks his grandeur lost. The language of the heart is creative, poetry; because the heart seeks another and a higher world, and not knowing it, invents it. It can invent, but not discover. It can sigh, and weep, and wait. It can mourn: he that drinketh of this water thirsts again. But God alone can reveal the water of life; the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him are beyond the horizon of finite intelligence, much more of fallen man. God's hidden wisdom, Christ crucified; ordained before the world unto our glory; Christ crucified, in whom God reveals Himself, His infinite love, holiness, power and truth, and whom He has appointed the centre and Head of all; the mystery of Christ and the Church could never have been discovered by man's reason. It is high above us, divine love and glory, which transcend all thought and imagination.

But it may be asked: God revealed Himself and His purpose in Christ. Why is another light, another teacher, needed? The necessity is obvious from history. The heathen world by wisdom knew not God, and when Christ came He was rejected; they who received Him confessed it was owing to a supernatural illumination, to the Spirit of God.

Israel, taught by holy men inspired of God, taught by ordinances and types which divine

wisdom gave, to show forth eternal truths; in possession of the Scriptures, the perfect testimony, the perfect portrait of Him that was to come; Israel, thus highly favoured and fully instructed, was not able to discern the divine features of that countenance, of which Moses and the prophets, of which all their history and institutions testified. He came to His own, but His own received Him not. They crucified Him. What greater proof can we have that Christ Himself remains unseen light, unless the Spirit reveal Him?

But look at the very disciples of our Lord. They were drawn to Jesus by the Father. Their knowledge that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, came not by nature, by flesh and blood, but it was from above. They loved Jesus with all their hearts, cleaving unto Him with all the fibres of their affection. And yet, while He was here, they understood not the Scriptures; they did not know what He meant when He spoke of the Temple being broken; standing under the cross, they did not know what was meant by His being pierced, and by water and blood flowing from His side. Even after the resurrection they did not know the mystery of His cross and exaltation. As Christ Himself taught them, they needed the light and the power of the Holy Ghost. He was to show to them the things which are freely given us of God. He was to glorify Christ. Even the instructions of the blessed Master, received with intensest admiration and affection, were not sufficient. They stood at

the threshold of Truth; the Holy Ghost alone can lead us into the Truth. God is in Christ; but the Holy Ghost alone reveals Him who is God manifest.

But let us go higher than the proof of actual history and experience. God in His love reveals Himself. It is His gracious will that I should know Him. In Christ Jesus He reveals Himself perfectly. Jesus is Light, full of brightness and sweet tenderness. And yet I require another light to see the True Light. How is this?

Simply because there is no other God, but the Triune—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It is not merely that God manifests Himself in this manner. But before the world was, irrespective of man and of angels, in Himself the eternal and ever-blessed God, is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Father loves the Son, the Son loves the Father, the Father and Son are known and loved by the Spirit from all eternity. God knows Himself in His Spirit. As the spirit of man is inseparable from man, and yet man is more than his spirit, as the spirit of man alone knoweth what is in man; so the Spirit of God is inseparable from God, He is God and yet God is also Father and Son; the Spirit of God alone searcheth the deep things of God. It is in the Spirit of God, that God is light in Himself, and therefore by the Spirit He sends forth light into the world and into the hearts of His children.

God *is* Triune, and therefore whenever God reveals Himself, when He creates, upholds, blesses,

redeems, sanctifies, glorifies, He appears as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

In creation we behold the Father, as the source; we behold the Word, by whom all things were made, and we behold the Spirit, moving upon the face of the waters. The Father does not create except through the Son, the Word does not create except according to the Father's will and in the Father; the Holy Ghost does not work or energise, except as sent by the Father and the Son.

In all revelation, and Scripture in particular, we behold the Triune God. The source of revelation is the gracious will and purpose of the Father. The substance of the revelation is Himself. God reveals Himself. But who is God-revealed? who else but the Son? And by whom does the Father know and love the Son, the express image, the brightness of His glory? By that very Spirit by whom He reveals Himself to man. Scripture is of the Father, its substance is Christ, and it is breathed by the Holy Ghost. A revealing God, a revealed God is the true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

So it is in redemption. We do not exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, or approach Him more closely, when we forget the Father and the Spirit. *It is the glory of Christ, that He reveals the Father and baptizes with the Holy Ghost.* Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one in majesty and glory, and one in love and grace.

The Father sent His Son. But only by the Holy Ghost. As the Creed says: "I believe in

Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord, conceived by the Holy Ghost." There is the beginning. When Jesus grew in stature, and in wisdom, and in favour with God and man, and had reached his maturity, and was brought to be baptized, what was the baptism that he received? He was anointed with the Holy Ghost. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and to bind up the broken-hearted." When, after His baptism, He went into the desert to be tempted, who led Him into the desert? The Spirit of God led him into the desert. When, after forty days, he gained the victory over Satan and came forth again into Galilee, He came forth in the power of the Holy Ghost. By the Spirit, as He Himself said, He destroyed the works of the devil. Because the Spirit was upon Him, therefore the Lord delighted in Him, and He executed the commission which the Father had given unto Him. It was by the eternal Spirit that He offered Himself unto God as a sacrifice upon the cross. It was by the Spirit that he was raised again from the dead, and mightily proved to be the Son of God according to the Spirit of Holiness. It was by the Spirit that at last, before His ascension, He gave commandment unto His disciples, and sent them forth to be the evangelists of the world. Jesus is Christ by the Spirit, and because He loved righteousness and hated iniquity therefore has God anointed Him with the oil of gladness, that it may flow into the

hearts of all His people. See Jesus sent by the Father, anointed with the Spirit, *your* Christ.

And then, in the call, in the conversion, in the sanctification of each individual, and in the whole Church of Christ, we see the same. It is by the outpouring of the Spirit of God that the heart is renewed, and that Christ takes up His abode in the soul. Our blessed Saviour Himself preached the Gospel unto Nicodemus: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." But first He preached the Holy Ghost. "Except a man be born again" he is blind; "he cannot see the kingdom of God," although, in the person of Christ, it stood before him. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh or whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

How blessed is it that our little children are taught that God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! No human mind, no angelic intelligence, is able to fathom the depths of this mystery; but the simplest child in the school of Christ is able to say, "God loved me; Jesus died for me; the Holy Ghost shewed unto me Jesus." Let us be, then, as babes, infants; helpless, ignorant, and yet guilty. Be like a little infant that has no strength of its own, that has no knowledge of its own, that has nothing of its own except sin, with which it has come into the world; and then see the Heaven

opened, and hear the name into which you are baptized—"The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." Remember, there is no bridge from this world unto the land of glory; remember, there is no ladder from this earth unto Heaven, unless from yonder shore and from yonder height, God, the Triune, Himself, comes down and brings us salvation. *Amor descendit* was a saying of the ancients—Love descends from heaven. What God, in His infinite love, wisdom and power, hath treasured up in Christ Jesus, Himself must give us by the power of the Holy Ghost. And thus we know and assuredly believe, that nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, because Christ is ours not by our own reason, not by our own energy, not by our own faithfulness, but by the Holy Ghost Himself, who is very God and eternal God, who links us unto the Lord Jesus Christ, to be His for evermore.

May we all be able to ascribe glory to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.

LECTURE VI.

THE SPIRIT'S TEACHING.

"... but God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit."
—1 Cor. ii. 9.

We read that the Apostle Paul found disciples in Ephesus, whom he asked: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since you believed?" And their reply was: "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." As the Lord Jesus said to Philip: "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me?" so may the Holy Ghost say to some true and sincere believers: "Have I been so long with you, revealing unto you the truth as it is in Jesus, working in you faith, shedding abroad in your hearts God's love, comforting you in your sorrow for sin, helping your infirmities in prayer, opening to your understanding wonders out of God's word, and yet have you not known me?"

This ignorance arises, to some extent, from the fact, that the Spirit testifies not of Himself, but of

the Father and the Son. It is His to glorify Christ. As when in the dark night a bright light is concentrated on one point, the light-bearer himself remains unseen; so the blessed Spirit, unperceived by the awakened sinner, causes all light to fall on the crucified Saviour and the loving Father. The soul exclaims: How great is the love of God! How marvellous is the grace of Jesus! He who has kindled the light, who has opened the eyes of the heart, who has renewed the soul, is as yet unknown and unobserved. John the Baptist compared himself with the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. In like manner does the Spirit direct the soul to Christ, and fills the heart with joy in believing Jesus; while as yet He does not reveal His own love and work.

O what a lesson and example to the Church and to the messengers of the Gospel! The more they are filled with the Spirit and the more they resemble Him, the less will they draw attention to themselves, the more will they testify exclusively of the grace of God. The Spirit and the Bride declare Christ. Their only object is to glorify Him. Their call is: Come to Jesus!

Another reason why the young believer knows little of the Spirit is because the Holy Ghost is so gentle. His approach is so soft, His adaptation to our peculiarities of character so perfect, His influences so deep and penetrating, that we think our own reason, imagination, will, conscience have

been acting of their own accord and with perfect spontaneity. We see the beauty of Jesus, we feel the truth of His doctrine and the depth of His love, above all we yield to the attraction of His cross. What can exceed the lucidity, the cogency, the simplicity of Christ's arguments, the force and intense earnestness of His appeals, the love and fervour of His invitations? The voice of Jesus penetrates to the inmost recesses of the soul, and attracts with an irresistible sweetness. When He speaks, the heart sees; it is a revelation. As the rays of light are straight, His words go direct to the soul. He speaks with authority, and His sayings are felt to be eternal truth. How natural is it to believe His transparent and convincing doctrine; how natural to love Him, the fairest among the sons of men. "I am thine," says the heart, and feels itself free for the first time. So suitable is the Gospel to our individuality, that we feel as if we had been called by name. How little do we know that the Holy Ghost has been influencing every faculty, every emotion, every mental process. So noiselessly, so quietly, so skilfully, so lovingly, so inwardly has the great Spirit been working, preparing, and chiselling, and fitting every stone of the building—thus, at the building of Solomon's Temple, no sound was heard. With perfect knowledge and with infinite love the Holy Ghost deals with our spirits, and when the creative fiat goes forth, it is mostly as the still small voice, which came to Elijah after the earthquake, and the tempest, and the fire.

Various are His methods. There is no fixed stereotype process of conversion. Suddenly in some, gradually in others; with much sorrow and many tears, with great struggles in mind and conscience, or with child-like simplicity and joyous wonder, like a child wakened by a mother's kiss, opening its eyes to nothing but love;—through striking providences, or in the usual course of an even and uneventful life; amid the sympathetic companionship of inquirers, or isolated in a family of unbelievers or a congregation of formalists. Who can enumerate all the ways in which the Holy Ghost brings the chosen children of God to the Saviour? But always is it by such close, intimate, loving and perfect adaptation to our character, entering into our thoughts and feelings and experiences, following us from our infancy, and accompanying us in every phase of our existence, that we are almost unconscious of his presence and influence. He is described as a dove, descending gently from heavenly heights, not like the mighty eagle's rapid and impetuous swoop; His approach is as the dawn of light, which wakes a thousand flowers in the calm and silence of morning.

Yet the believer knows that he has experienced divine grace and power. God has revealed to him Christ; God has created him anew. The light in which he now rejoices is different from all previous knowledge; it never shone on him before. No human instruction, no research and thought of his own, not even the Scriptures brought it to him. It is a supernatural influence of which he is conscious;

and as it is unique, so it brings with it the assurance of its truth. He cannot doubt. The love of God, the love of the Saviour, the efficacy of prayer, the blessedness of communion, the hope of heaven are realities. No doubt can enter here, no uncertainty; no arguments can shake His faith or add to His conviction. There is a testimony within his heart that the true light now shineth. "I know whom I believe." Now we ourselves know. Like the men of Samaria, we believe not on the testimony of others. Yet "the reason, why we ourselves know is, that our knowledge is not of ourselves but of God."* Hereby we know that we know Him by the Spirit he hath given to us. And this light is sweet. There is a blessedness in this knowledge of the Father and the Son, a peace and joy which satisfy the heart and fill the immortal soul, so that there is perfect rest. Whence is this? Because the Holy Ghost, who is God, has revealed to us the things which are freely given us of God, because by the Spirit we call the Father Abba, and Jesus Lord.

As the believer progresses and his path becomes more complicated he is taught more about the Spirit; for he needs this doctrine increasingly for his comfort and growth. His faith is not so strong and unwavering as he imagined; the ardour of his love soon vanishes; the power of sin, which at first he fancied was utterly broken, makes itself felt again; prayer becomes languid, and joy seems to have taken its flight. In other words, God leads

* Von Baader.

him into the valley; and lest he should make a Christ of his faith, and a well-spring of a cistern, he is taught something of himself. Who does not know of this second stage in the Christian life, at first so painful, so humiliating, and filling the soul with perplexity? It is then that we learn that the Spirit, who has renewed our hearts, must also sustain the new life; that we depend entirely on divine grace and power, not merely to bring us to Christ, but to keep us in Him. The necessity of this constant divine influence reminds us of our sinfulness and the utter corruption of the flesh; the certainty of this divine preservation gives us a new view of God's love and assurance of His faithfulness. Thus, as in all God's dealings, there is progress in ever-increasing, widening and deepening cycles; the believer experiences again, in a more enlarged and profound manner, what he was taught at his first conversion. He sees now more clearly the guilt and helplessness of man, the hardness of the human heart, our utter dependence on a Father to love us, on a Saviour to save us by the shedding of His blood, and on a divine Spirit to quicken and enlighten the soul, and fill it with the love of God. He feels now, with deeper humility and truer joy, that salvation is of God, that divine grace lays the foundation and performs the good work in us until the day of Christ. Then he beholds the gift and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Thus was it that the first disciples, after a season of childlike peace and joy in the presence and companionship of

Jesus, lost the Saviour, and with Him the garden of the soul—trees and flowers and songs of birds vanished, and all was winter, cold, silent and dead. And then He returned unto them never to leave them; and, on the day of Pentecost, He, in the person of the Comforter, descended and made all things new, and it was summer, full of fragrance and brightness. They had to lose Jesus for a while, to long for the Spirit and to rejoice in His coming.

What manner of love, what marvellous gift has been bestowed on us! The Spirit, whom we have received is God, divine in essence and majesty. *The Spirit is God.* As divine names and attributes are given to Him, so Scripture declares that He is Lord, Sovereign and Infinite. He is eternal, omniscient and omnipresent. His infinite power and wisdom are manifested in creation, providence and in redemption. Because man is the temple of the Holy Ghost, *God* dwelleth in us; because the Comforter is ours, *the Father and the Son* have taken up their abode in our hearts.

The gift of the Holy Ghost is the most precious gift of that love which the Father has towards us for the sake of His dear Son, and because we love Him, and believe that He came from God. It is the gift in which the purposes of God towards us are fulfilled and consummated. The gift of the Spirit is the promise of the Father. This is the expression the Saviour uses, though He Himself had often, and especially on that last evening, spoken of the Comforter. But He calls it *the Father's* promise, not

merely because all acts and blessings in the economy of grace proceed from the Father, but because in the dispensation which especially manifested the Father's purpose, in the economy which preceded the Advent, the Father had promised the Spirit as the great blessing of the Messianic times: "I will pour out my Spirit upon you; I will put my Spirit within them; they shall be all taught of God." The promise came from the Father, who during the period of Israel's minority under the law, when even the true servants of God had not yet received the Spirit of adoption, and were waiting for redemption and light, was continually comforting them with the blessed assurance of the advent of Jehovah, of the approach of light and glory, of knowledge and of liberty, brought to them by a Divine Person, and implanted into their hearts by His Spirit. The Messiah and the Spirit always go together; and the gift of the Spirit is the great purpose of the Messiah's coming and the chief fruit of His work. And it is called *the* promise, because it involves all other blessings. The new covenant is contrasted with the old; in the one is condemnation, in the other forgiveness. In the one is death because of condemnation, in the other life or spirit because of pardon. The entire renewal of man by the indwelling Spirit is based upon the atonement of Christ. Hence, when the Spirit is called the promise of the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, in His vicarious death and glorious ascension, is seen as the Mediator of the new covenant; as without blood there is no remission of sins, so it

is through and with Christ's blood the Holy Ghost is sent of the Father. For the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the new covenant. He is the Spirit of grace. He can dwell only where there is forgiveness of sin. He comes with the blood of atonement. It is because in Christ we have been delivered from the condemnation of the law, and from the guilt of sin, and from the wrath of God, that the Spirit can take up His abode within us. As the Apostle Paul teaches the Galatians (iii. 13, 14), Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Because Jesus has led captivity captive He has received gifts for the rebellious sons of men. The Spirit thus comes through Christ; He comes also from Christ.

For Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost. The Spirit in His sevenfold plenitude rested upon Him. The Spirit was the glory which filled the temple of Christ's humanity. Jesus was the golden candlestick, filled in its seven branches with the heavenly oil. And after He had offered Himself by the eternal Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost was raised from the grave, He was the second Adam. He was crucified through weakness; He liveth now by the power of God. He is glorified. His body also is spiritual; the Lord Christ is now Spirit (2 Cor. iii. 17), and according to the Father's eternal counsel, He is the Quickening Spirit, the Head of the Church, anointed with the oil of gladness, who filleth all the members of His

mystical body with the Spirit. Humanity, in the person of Jesus Christ, is exalted now high above all principalities and powers, it has been received into the throne of Godhead. The infinite love of the Father rests on the glorified Humanity, and out of the throne of God and of the Lamb proceedeth now the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal.

How precious is to us the gift of the Holy Ghost, because He is sent us from the Man Christ Jesus, the Lamb that was slain!

How wonderful and intimate is this union which, through the Christ-given Spirit, unites us with the Father and Son! Awful when we think that the Spirit is God, yet blessed in its sweetness and tenderness when we think that He comes from Jesus, true Man as well as very God, from Him who is not ashamed to call us brethren. The very presence of the Spirit in our hearts reminds us of Christ's sufferings; for if Christ had not died for us, the Spirit would not have been sent. But this very presence assures us of Christ's glorious exaltation; for if He was not at the right hand of the Father, He could not have shed forth the power of the Spirit.

The gift of the Spirit includes all other gifts. In the chapter on which we have been meditating the Apostle dwells chiefly on the *teaching* of the Spirit. "God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit." "We have received the Spirit, that we may know the things freely given to us of God."

Thus also, in the words of consolation which the Saviour addressed to His disciples on that last evening, He spoke several times of the Spirit as the Spirit of Truth. "He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." The whole realm of truth is His. All that Jesus taught of the Father and of Himself is the object of His testimony; and all that Jesus could not say unto His disciples, because they were not able to bear it, the Holy Ghost revealed, after Pentecost, unto the Church by Prophets and Apostles.* The Holy Ghost, who is in essential and perfect communion with the Father and the Son, reveals unto us eternal realities. He alone knows the infinite love of God with which He has loved us; for he alone can fathom the depth out of which this love proceeds. Thus, what the Holy Ghost reveals and imparts is the knowledge of realities, which are eternal in God.†

* The promises of Christ in John xiv. and xvi. (as well as the declarations of Paul in our chapter), refer primarily to the Apostles. We are "built upon the *foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." At the same time, as is evident from the Apostolic Epistles themselves, these promises and gifts belong to all Christians, and they receive them according to their several positions and capabilities.

† *The Spirit of Truth.*—"Let this be thought no slight consolation, that Christ sends unto us the Spirit of Truth; for nothing can comfort in distress so much as when the heart is sure of its cause." . . . . . "The preaching of the Holy Ghost is not like the dreams and thoughts of man, who speak of

He brings a *living* knowledge; His light is the light of life. It is not information, an insight into the connection of truths and an appreciation of their beauty and grandeur. Men may have such knowledge, vast and deep, and yet be destitute of the grace of God and uninhabited by the divine Spirit. To know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent is life eternal. This knowledge of God, beholding Him and Christ, is the spiritual, never ending life, which the Spirit creates within us. A new birth preceded the first glimpse into the kingdom of God, likewise is our knowledge of God and Christ the result of the Spirit's quickening influence.

Dead knowledge is not the work of the Holy Ghost—knowledge which remains quiescent, silent and lonely; for the knowledge which the Spirit gives is *communion*. We see the Father and

their own, of things which they have neither seen nor experienced. But He shall preach such things which have a real existence, that which He receives of the Father and Christ." —LUTHER. Compare, also, his beautiful exposition of the third Article of the Creed (of which creed, much neglected in some churches, Augustine says, "Symbolum est regula fidei brevis et grandis; brevis numero verborum, grandis pondere sententiarum,"): I believe that I cannot believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, or come to Him by my own reason or strength; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and preserved me in the true faith, even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies, and preserves the whole Church on earth in the true one faith and in Christ Jesus; in which Church He daily and graciously forgives me and all believers all sins, and shall raise me and all the dead on the last day, and give unto me and all believers life everlasting. This is certainly true.

the Son *as seeing us*. When we behold them by the revelation of the Spirit, it is as beholding us with infinite love and bestowing upon us the blessings of grace. We know because we are known. "Thou Father, thou Son, seest me," is the immediate consciousness of the soul when there is a spiritual perception of God. In other words, adoration, love, petition, listening to God's voice, receiving the love and peace of Christ, *communion*, is involved in this knowledge.

This knowledge is therefore also an *experience* of God; when we know—we possess and receive God and His gifts. We know the Father, and He *is* our Father; we know Christ, we see His mediation; we have come to the blood of the new covenant, and we *possess* Christ and experience the power and efficacy of His death and resurrection. We know the spiritual blessings in heavenly places, and, knowing them, we possess them. We have not merely the picture or image, but the substance of divine realities.*

The Spirit's teaching centres in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Here, and nowhere else is the life of light. Here is the renewal of repentance and of faith; here is the dying of the old man and daily renewal of our mind. The Spirit also saith: "I am determined not to know anything

* The Hebrew word "know" is very comprehensive. It does not refer only to mental knowledge, but it includes moral and spiritual affections; and, in reference to God, signifies inward communion with Him and experience of Him.

among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, for His knowledge is all-comprehensive and all-sufficient."

The Holy Ghost reveals to us truth and enlightens the understanding of our heart. He impresses truth deeply upon the memory, and gives such a vivid realization, that we taste the goodness of the Lord. He enables us to apply the words of God to various circumstances, and to have the mind of Christ in the daily duties of life. He reminds us of what we are apt to forget, and points out what we are inclined to pass by. It is He, who by repeated impressions and glimpses into the light and love of the Heavenly sanctuary, makes our spirits clear and strong, to know the mystery of the Father and the Son. Above all is it His delight to make us rejoice in the atonement of Christ, to make us know the power of Christ's resurrection and the efficacy of His intercession.

Without the Spirit we would faint and die, even after our renewal; but He is the life of our life, He nourishes us with that which is meat indeed and drink indeed. He works in us that which is well pleasing in God's sight, and changes us into the same image from glory to glory. Trust not in thy strength, and faint not because of thy weakness. As an old witness saith:* "In a moment the Spirit may, according to His good pleasure, minister unto us more than we ask or understand, so that the heart is full of confidence and joy, fervent in love,

* Steinhofer.

strong and courageous in resisting evil, patient and serene in sufferings, wise and skilful in working for God; filled, in short, with fruits of righteousness. The Spirit knows best what we need. Blessed are all who have such a Comforter."

It is the Spirit Himself who teaches and enlightens. The truth itself, the preaching of the Gospel, the reading of the Scripture has no inherent power to bring knowledge into the soul. These are only the instruments, the Spirit is the agent; they are only seed, the Spirit is the sower; they are only the sword, the Spirit is the energy, the hand, that wields it. They shall be taught of God. God causes the light of the Gospel to shine into our hearts. How little we realise this truth, so comforting and full of encouragement. How apt are we to forget the living Spirit in the gifts and channels which He uses. How fond are we of placing ourselves in God's place; if not in the Father's in Christ's; if not in Christ's in that of the Spirit.

But remembering the one Spirit who alone enlightens and quickens, let us bear in mind the variety of His instruments. All creation and all providence are subservient to him in His great work. The grandeur and majesty of the starry heaven, the beauty and loveliness of earth in summer, the fragrance of a rose, the song of a bird, the smile of a child, the joys and sorrows of your daily life—all around you may be used by the Spirit to teach and touch your mind. There are within you instincts, principles, memories and impressions,

dating from the simple sanctuary of childhood, of voices of prayer, of testimonies of tears, of love, of silent Christ-like life; tender chords, which are unknown to nearest friends, and which are concealed from your own consciousness; the Holy Ghost knows and uses all, He can touch your heart and make all that is within you bend towards the Saviour's image. All your thoughts, feelings, associations, your whole past history, your whole mental life—all is known to Him, and with perfect and all-penetrating wisdom and skill, it is His to influence and mould you. One God, one Christ, one Spirit are in creation, providence and redemption.

His great instrument, however, is the Word, the Holy Scripture. This Word is His, though it is also human. It is inspired by Him, and yet all its utterances pass through human hearts, and are tremulous with human tears of sorrow, adoration, and joy. This Scripture, which shows forth Christ in all His fulness, as the revelation of the Father and the Saviour and glory of sinners, is like Christ, majestic, perfect, holy in its divine aspect, tender, sympathetic, and lowly in its humanity. It knows all, and discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and the joints and marrow. It is full of grace, sunshine and comfort, healing the wounded heart, and filling it with peace and joy, revealing the infinite love of God. It is stern and

uncompromising, concluding all under sin, and writing the sentence of death on all that is of the flesh; it is full of heavenly music, announcing the promise of eternal life, and publishing peace to them that are afar off and to them that are nigh. It is so concentrated and intense, and determined to know only one thing that is needful, one knowledge that is essential, one Lord who must be served, one point which must be reached; and it is so universal, sympathetic and thoughtful, that no relationship of life, no sorrow, no temptation, no duty, but finds here guidance, education, help; it calls to the kings and legislators of nations to be wise and instructed; it speaks in homely and loving accents to the little child and dying saint. This Word is like Christ; this Word is like the Spirit; this Word is like the Father. It is for man, for all ages of the world, for all periods of the Church. It is the great instrument of the Spirit.

Here He still breathes. Here is heard the voice of the living God. Here are the words of the Holy Ghost; and His words, (not merely His thoughts,) are spirit and life. The Spirit testifies to us that the Scriptures are of God; that in believing its testimony we are believing God; in obeying its precepts we are yielding obedience to our heavenly Father; in trusting its promises, we are resting in the faithfulness of the Most High. Here the Spirit brings us into communion with God Himself. The Word of God is in our mouth. We receive it on divine authority, not because of Isaiah's or Peter's great

sanctity, or because they are authenticated by the Church. Oh, how little do they know what we teach, who speak of the Bible being our Paper Pope—a book-authority! They think only of a written or printed book; we look upon it as a Spirit-breathed Revelation, in which the Spirit still breathes, and it is to *divine* authority we are yielding. Here is the garden where the voice of the turtle is heard. Oh! expect great things from the Spirit in the reading of Scripture and believe, here is more than you are conscious of at the time, more than you can measure of progress in knowledge, or of deepening of your faith and love. We do not see plants grow, but we know that as the rain and snow which come down from Heaven return not thither, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give bread to the eater and seed to the sower, so is the Word that goeth forth out of God's mouth, "it shall not return unto Him void, but shall accomplish that which He pleases, and prosper in the thing whereto He sent it." You shall live by it, and receive grace and strength to bring the testimony of life to others.

Next to the Word, and intimately connected with it, is the preaching of the Gospel. The living witnesses are of great importance. Christ gives them to the Church. They are sent and upheld by Him. "He who walketh amid the seven golden candlesticks holds the seven stars in His hand." (Rev. i. 20.) The Spirit testifies, and Christ's Apostles also testify. God has committed the word of reconciliation not to angels, not to the Scriptures, but to *men*. Preaching

may appear to the world foolishness. Men at best see in it only an effort of human wisdom and skill, and an expression of human earnestness and affection. It is God's power by which He calls men unto repentance and faith. It is Christ Himself speaking in us. It is divine love, longing for the salvation of souls, which is the very heart of preaching. It is the voice and power of the Spirit.

Oh, how solemn is it to listen to the preaching of God's truth. How solemn and yet how blessed! Only look to the Spirit, and pray that utterance may be given to preach Christ spiritually—and then you will receive our word, not as the word of man, but it will come unto you in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. Then *Faith* will come by hearing; faith, which rests in the love of Jesus, faith, which never rests in the service of Jesus. For true spiritual faith, which is the result of preaching, when accompanied by the power of the Spirit, is like Mary, ever at rest, sitting at the feet of Jesus and receiving His word, and like Paul, never at rest in the service and obedience of that Saviour who loved us and gave Himself for us. Amen.

Thou holy Light and Guide divine,
Oh, cause the Word of life to shine;
Teach us to know our God aright,
And call Him Father with delight.
Keep us, O Lord, from all strange lore,
That we may seek no masters more,
But with true Faith in Christ abide,
And heartily in Him confide.

LECTURE VII.

THE SPIRITUAL MAN.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto Him: neither can He know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ."—1 Cor. ii. 14—16.

What is meant by the spiritual man? Every one is spiritual who loves Jesus, the Saviour, who died for him.

Simple and encouraging as this answer is, it implies the mystery of Christ and the Church. Only he is spiritual who is in Christ; a member of the mystical body, of which the glorified Head is in Heaven; a branch in the true Vine; who, by the power of the Holy Ghost, has been transplanted out of Adam, out of the realm of Sin and Nature, into the second Adam, the kingdom of righteousness and grace. To *become* spiritual, requires a new birth from above; to *be* spiritual, is to possess the Spirit of Christ as an indwelling Spirit, uniting us with

Christ the Lord who is the Head of the Church. Here is a great mystery.

At the right hand of God, enthroned in glory, possessing all power in Heaven and on earth, adored by angels, we behold Jesus, the Son of Man, in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Below, on earth, are the members of His body, His people, who by faith and the indwelling of the Spirit are one with Him. They are the children of Adam, yet they are no longer in Adam, but in Christ, new creatures; sin still dwells in them, yet sin has no longer dominion over them, for Christ dwells in their hearts by faith; they think, and speak and act as other men do, yet it is Christ who lives in them, who by His Spirit guides and animates them, and brings forth the fruits of righteousness and holiness. They have bodies of infirmity and death, and yet their bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who shall quicken them at the coming of Jesus, and change them into bodies of glory and immortality. They are living on earth, but their citizenship is in Heaven. They are branches of a tree, whose root is at the right hand of God. They are in a world doomed to death by the corruption of lust, but they are partakers of the divine nature. They are men, and yet they are more than men; for they are Christ-men, and Christ is the incarnate Son of God. They are accounted the offscouring of the earth; they have been mocked, persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, killed; but they shall come again, and with Christ Jesus be the

rulers and kings of the earth. Such are the spiritual,* Spirit-born, and Spirit-inhabited men, the sinners who, saved by grace, love Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

* In the early part of the second century a Christian thus described the "Spiritual" men (Letter to Diognetus):—"The Christians are not separated from other men by earthly abode, by language, or by customs. They dwell not in cities of their own, they use not peculiar language, nor affect a singular mode of life. . . . Yet they show a peculiarity of conduct wonderful and striking to all (paradoxical). They inhabit their own country, and yet are strangers. They take part in everything as citizens, and suffer all things as pilgrims. Every strange country is their home, and every home is to them a strange country. They live in, but not according to, the flesh. They dwell on earth, and walk in Heaven. They obey the laws, and are lifted above the laws by their lives. They love all, and are persecuted by all. They are unknown, and yet men condemn them; they are poor, and yet make many rich; they are despised, yet crowned with honour. They do good, and are treated as malefactors. They rejoice in suffering death, for thereby they attain life. In short, what the soul is in the body, the Christians are in the world. The soul pervades with life all the members of the body; so the Christians are scattered through the world. The soul is in, but not of, the body; the soul invisible dwells in the visible body: thus the Christians are seen in their outward life, but their godly mind is not seen. The flesh hates and opposes the soul, though the soul does not hurt it, but only condemns its lusts. So the world hates the Christians. The soul loves the body; the Christians love them by whom they are hated. The body encloses the soul, and yet is preserved by it; so the Christians, whom the world keeps, as it were, in prison, preserve the world. . . . Such an important position has God assigned to them." He explains the source of this new humanity to be the incarnate Son of God. Such has been the testimony of the Church of all ages.

Es glänzet der Christen inwendiges leben, &c.

God manifests Himself in creation in ascending gradations. In vast inorganic masses, as sustaining force; in the world of plants and animals, as the fountain of life, the Creator of organism; in man, as the source of wisdom and of love. Beautiful is the light which is reflected in the precious stone; yet the rose or the simplest daisy is much higher and nobler than the most beautiful gem; and higher than any plant is the life which speaks to us in the touching notes of the nightingale; and incomparably higher than the highest manifestation of animal life is the smile of a child, or the first utterances out of the mouth of babes, proclaiming God's praise.

But as man is above the noblest and highest representatives of the animal world, and as the animal is above the plant, and the plant above the stone, so is the Son of Man, the Christ, above humanity, and so are the Christ-men above the natural Adamic race. And as no stone develops into a plant, or plant into bird, or animal into man,* so humanity never produced Christ, the Son of Man. He came from above, out of the bosom of the Father; He is from Heaven, Lord of all. So are the Christ-men, not born of the flesh or the will of man, but of

* The teaching of Genesis i. is explicit. God called forth, by His creative power, out of the waters and the earth, the various species of plants and animals; each after his kind, "whose seed is in itself." As for man, his creation is most solemnly narrated (Gen. i. 26); and upon this fundamental fact rests the whole superstructure of Scripture teaching of man's redemption by the Son of God, who became man.

God.* And as the plant appears on the substratum of the mineral world, and comprises all the noble elements it contains, and yet is above it, and the animal includes and embodies all the elements of plant life, and is king of the plant world; so is the Son of Man the true and perfect Man, in whom all human excellencies and capabilities find their adequate expression and culminating point; and yet He is more than man—the Lord and Head. So are with and in Him the Christ-men, true men, and yet more than men; they will reign over men with Christ. After the four kingdoms, which are represented by lion, bear, leopard and the fierce

* The natural or merely psychical man does not understand spiritual things. He deems them foolishness; earth and the lower sphere of reason and feeling satisfy him. But among the psychical men are some who break through the circle of Nature and Time into a higher region. We call them men of genius. But with all their power of thought and imagination, they cannot lift themselves above "the world." *Faith* alone is the victory which overcometh the world. The Spirit of God alone changes us into spiritual men. "Genius" is often, to the more thoughtful and noble-minded, the substitute for God's revelation. They know and love that which is "spirituel." And in many views and expressions there is necessarily a similarity between the man of genius and the spiritual man, because both are opposed to the lower sphere of the visible. But there is a radical opposition between the psychical man, who has not the mind of Christ, and the spirituel. And as the age advances, the conflict between Christ's Church and the world will become more what it was in the Apostolic times: between the foolishness of God and the wisdom of man. Paganism, the worship of the created (spirit)—the self-sufficiency of man (*αὐταρκεια*)—man, being a god to himself—is the spirit of the world. Hebraism, or Jehovahism, and Hellenism are the two principles.

beast, shall come the Son of Man and the saints of the Most High; then shall be the reign of humanity.*

Christ is the Lord from Heaven in His divine glory, but also in His humanity. He is the Son of Man, the spiritual man, who has life, and who is able to change the natural man into a spiritual; for He can baptize with the Holy Ghost. And only He who is from above and above all can renew, can quicken, can elevate man into a heavenly life and inheritance. He was born of the Virgin Mary, conceived by the Holy Ghost, and anointed with the Spirit without measure. Though His is a body of weakness, though He appears in the likeness of sinful flesh, though He is surrounded with suffering and evil, and is full of sorrow and acquainted with grief, see Him throughout His walk on earth the spiritual, the heavenly Man, the Lord of life, liberty, power and glory. Do not all Adamic men around him appear bondsmen, without light, without life, without goodness, without joy? What infinite distance is between Him, as Son of Man and all others, even the disciples! When Jesus speaks, when He argues, when He quotes the Scriptures, what light, what simplicity, what depth! He speaks another language, He thinks and reasons, and sees truth as one who lives in another element; He is the Son of Man, who is in Heaven. How

* Compare Psalm viii., Dan. ii. and vii., Heb. ii. The same subject is more fully treated in my Lectures on the Lord's Prayer. Chap. vii. and viii.

dark, how ignorant, how confused, how clumsy are all other men beside Him. What liberty and dignity breathes in every word He utters, in every step He takes. He is the only Man who *walked* on earth. All others move with uncertainty, err into byepaths, have to be forced back into the right way; they must retrace their steps. Christ walked, always in the light, in love, in strength; the path of this just Man is like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. See Him in His poverty; poorer than the foxes, who have holes, and the birds of the air, which have nests; but the whole world is His palace. How rich is He; free from care and irradiated with brightest serenity, He watches whole nights on the mountain top under the quiet stars of heaven, He sleeps calmly during the fearful tempest of the sea. Is He not Lord, as Man, when by faith in the Father He rebukes the sea, heals the sick, raises the dead? Have you watched Him feeding the multitude with five loaves and two fishes? What poverty for a King and Messiah wherewith to welcome His people! See Him as the Son of Man, lifting His eyes unto Heaven, and thanking the Father for His gift! See Him by faith feeding the multitude, and sending them away satisfied and rejoicing; baskets of fragments remaining in rich exuberance of His bounty and love!

Jesus, the Son of Man, was the spiritual Man; tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin; with a body of weakness, not like that of the first

Adam in Paradise, but in the likeness of sinful flesh. He lived by faith, and, abiding in the Father's love, kept His commandments, and thus was Lord of all. But He was alone. There was none like Him. In that kingdom, of which He spoke to Nicodemus, where only the Spirit-born can enter, He was as yet the only inhabitant. He had come, not to abide alone, to be the king and the head of a new creation, of a spiritual humanity. And therefore He died. Oh, the love of our glorious Lord! He took upon Him our sin. Looking unto God, He glorified divine holiness and justice, and took the *severest* view of sin. It deserves condemnation, wrath, the hiding of the Father's countenance. He was willing to bear the penalty. But looking unto man, He took the *most loving and gentle* view of sin. He looked upon it as a disease, and is He not the Physician to heal? He looked upon us as sheep who have gone astray, torn, wounded, perishing; and is He not the good Shepherd, full of pity and tenderness? He saw us as lying helpless and dying on the road, cruelly injured by the adversary; and is not He the compassionate and merciful Saviour, who cannot pass by, but must save us, even with His own death. Oh, what a Mediator between God and man! Him we love with adoration, and adore with love.

Christ rose from the dead, the second Adam, the quickening Spirit. Now begins the Church; now begins the fulfilment of the promise, "He shall see His seed." As the Church was manifested on

Pentecost, so it is by the renewal of the Holy Ghost that each individual member is grafted into Christ. Not by birth, not by baptism, not by our own works, but by the Spirit are we joined to the Lord. To become a Christian is not to adopt certain opinions and habits, not to engraft new thoughts and feelings and works on our former natural self; it is to become a new creature, to be changed by the power of the Holy Ghost, to become spiritual. So great a thing is it to be a Christian, to be a Christ-man, a member of the body, of which He is Head. Yet so easy is it to become a Christian! You need only be a sinner, weary and heavy laden; you need only hear the voice: "Come unto me. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." A Christian is a man born of God. But whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.*

Christ draws the believer unto Himself; into Himself; into closest communion of life and work. He identifies us with Him. As He is, so are we in the world. He is the light of the world, and He assigns to us the same position. Like Him, we are witnesses, priests, and kings. As the Father sent Christ, so He sends us.

He wishes to raise us into most intimate union of

* Compare John iii. The Lord first explains the necessity of regeneration; He then proclaims full and free salvation through faith in His grace. There is a blessed harmony between the stern and exclusive, "Except a man be born of the Spirit," and the loving and all-comprehensive, "Whosoever believeth on Him." Compare my exposition of John iii. on "Conversion," p. 181.

life and power. When the disciples wondered that in consequence of Christ's word the fig-tree had withered away, the Saviour said: Have faith in God! If in union with Christ we have faith, as a grain of mustard seed, we shall be able to remove mountains, and nothing shall be impossible to us. "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these, because I go to the Father." Christ and the believers are one, because we are no longer merely natural, but spiritual men.

The Spirit is given unto us as the Spirit of Sonship. We are not merely in the position of children, but we are in truth and reality the children of God. Our adoption is an actual investment with Sonship. There can be in the nature of things no parallel to this in the earthly sphere. Christ is the only-begotten of the Father, and we in Him are truly sons of God, for we are born of God and one with Christ. And because we are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts.

Think of it, believer, that the Spirit of filial trust, communion and delight in the Father, that was in Christ, is in thee also; that thou also knowest, that the Father is always with thee and that he loves thee with an infinite love. Take hold of Christ, and trusting in Him as thy Saviour, rise with Him above fear and the atmosphere of nature and the first creation into the heavenly region of Sonship, and say Abba in the full assurance of faith. And

then go back to earth and man, to work and suffering, in the Spirit of liberty which the Son of God only can give and which Sons only possess. To do the will of God, in action or in suffering, will be no hardship and bondage, but as it was to Christ, your "meat," the strength and refreshment of your life, until in Heaven you possess that perfect and only true liberty, when God's will is your will, and when all that is within you praises His holy name.

The Spirit of Christ is, as we saw in our last lecture, the Spirit of light. Now we see the kingdom of God; we understand and know what before was only dimly perceived as a theory. We have an unction from the Holy One and know all things.* The Christian is one who has the Chrisma, the Anointing. Christ is the Holy One who sends the Spirit. The world cannot receive the Holy Ghost, for it seeth and heareth Him not; but the believer is a spiritual man. We know the whole truth. The Apostle reminds the Christians here, that they are taught of God (Theodidact); and that they are not dependent on human teaching. They are not to be led astray by the assumptions of philosophy and human erudition. Since in Christ are hid all treasures of knowledge and wisdom, and they have the Spirit of Christ, whose it is to lead us into truth, they must only abide in communion with the Father and Son, and they shall be taught all things as they need, and as it is salutary for them according to the Spirit's wisdom and love.

* 1 John ii. 20.

What we learn by the Spirit we hold fast. For in learning it, we receive the assurance that it is God's truth.

The Spirit of Christ, of Sonship, is eminently the Spirit of love. The life of Jesus on earth was a manifestation of love. Love is the fulfilment of the law, as well as the essence of the Gospel. The law demands love, and thereby goes beyond itself, contradicts itself, announces its insufficiency and stretches forth into the Gospel. The law cannot give love, because it cannot give life. If life could come by the law, Christ and the Gospel were not needed. The law is good and holy and just, but we are sinful and dead; the law is spiritual, but we are carnal; the law is fulfilled in love, but we cannot and do not respond to it. But what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God in His infinite mercy accomplished through Christ. In the New Covenant God gives us the Spirit, and the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us; *we love.* Therefore the Spirit is essentially love. The law demands love, the Spirit creates love. And this as the Spirit of *Christ.* All His life on earth was love to God and man. His zeal for the glory and truth of God, His holiness and uninterrupted communion with the Father manifested itself in His unfailing patience, meekness, gentleness, and forgiveness. The most blasphemous and malicious accusations of His enemies He answers calmly. He weeps over Jerusalem, He washes His disciples' feet, He dies for them on the cross. All that is in

the world, however evil and dark and bitter, brings out only the fulness of His love.

Hence to be filled with the Spirit of Christ is to love; it is to possess the spirit of a divine love, "which beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things"—the Spirit of Christ crucified, whose love no waters could quench, for it was stronger than death.

The spiritual man lives on earth, and he has to meet affliction and sorrow, he has to deal with sin and doubt, he has to keep himself unspotted from the world, and he has finally to face death. The Apostle Paul (Rom. viii.) gives a very full and glorious exposition of the spiritual man's position, trial, and victory.

1. With regard to the afflictions and trials, which in this world of sin and sorrow press often heavily on the child of God. The Spirit is the Comforter. He is tender, for He is the Spirit of Jesus, who wept. Nay, the Spirit is in deepest sympathy with all suffering creation. It is because we have the first fruits of the Spirit that we groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption. But the Spirit enables us to compare the sufferings of this present time with the glory which shall be revealed in us. It is easy in times of sunshine and peace to say: "Heaven will be still more beautiful and lovely than earth;" but in affliction and grief the Holy Ghost only can give us a realising and comforting hope of glory.

But the Spirit not merely sustains us in trial, he

watches also over the precious seed, which, unconscious to the soul, falls into its depths, and which yields *afterwards* the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Without the Spirit of Christ affliction would be not merely comfortless, but barren and unfruitful. But the Spirit of Christ, who through sufferings entered into His glory, converts affliction into the cross, and worketh in us patience, experience, hope; a fuller life of love.

2. In relation to sin. Christ was sinless, Satan could find nothing in Him. The poisonous influences of the world could not penetrate into His holy soul. He was harmless and undefiled. Christ was filled with the Spirit. He knew the weakness of the flesh, but he knew no sin. But we are full of sin; we have to do both with sins and with sin, with the manifestations and the existence of the carnal mind, the flesh, in which dwelleth no good thing. Yet we are not carnally minded, but spiritually minded, we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit. For Christ is in us, and we have the Spirit of Christ. How then are we to solve this apparent contradiction? In what other way than by *Faith?* By reckoning ourselves to have died unto sin; by resting in the death of Jesus and his redemption; by believing that Christ has redeemed us from the guilt and power of sin. If we thus look unto Christ, the Spirit works in us mightily.* Sin is

* The Spirit of God reproves and rebukes, he rouses the conscience and leads us to judge ourselves. The reason of this is our continual forgetfulness of the power of Christ's death and resur-

imprisoned as a criminal, it is mortally wounded, nay, it is put to death. He who endeavours to fight with sin and to destroy it—apart from the death of Christ, apart from the perfect pardon and acceptance, which God has given us in Jesus, sinks back into the region of law and the fallen creation, and must experience, that the law is not the death but the *strength* of sin. Rest in the death of Jesus and you will experience that sin lies enchained; the Spirit crucifies sin by the cross of Christ, and by the resurrection-power He constantly renews our life; so that although we live in the flesh, we do not walk according to the flesh.

The whole secret of the Christian's life is looking unto Jesus. We believe, that in Him we are complete, and that actually and according to the rights of the New Testament in His blood, we possess in Him liberty and holiness; therefore we have peace, though constantly fighting against sin; we have life, though we are in the body of death.

The crucifixion of the old man is accompanied with peace. It is not by self-imposed penances, abstinences, mortifications, that we overcome sin. All this may be carnal, and making the *cross of Christ* of none effect. When we crucify the old man, we are not in doubt and torment, in the spirit of bondage and uncertainty; we are rejoicing

rection. The more we are filled with the Spirit, the more Christ lives in us, the less work will there be for the conscience. We are to live by faith, and our definition of sin is: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin!" "Abide in me" is the simple, but all comprehensive counsel and command of our loving Saviour.

in Christ Jesus. We rest in full assurance of faith in the redemption, which we have in His blood, and it is thus that we know the power of His resurrection. Looking unto Jesus in perfect peace and liberty, we receive strength to conquer sin and to mortify the members which are upon earth. The great and faithful High Priest applies by the Spirit the power of His blood unto our hearts; and a Christian is full of peace and joy, while he denies himself and fights the good fight of faith. His position is within the gates of the city of peace; his discipline is by the grace of God, which bringeth salvation.

And the Spirit Himself helpeth our infirmities: so that we have abundant reason to praise the Lord, and to be always rejoicing. *Only believe*, that you have died with Christ and that you are risen with Him! You are justified by faith, you are sanctified by faith. The spiritual man knows nothing save Christ crucified, the living Christ! The Spirit always directs us to the Father and to Christ, not to Himself and the work within us. As Ötinger, in his paraphrase of Isaiah lv., says from deep experience: "Do not treat my Gospel as a law. It becomes a law to you, if you wish to understand the manner of your growth. But you are to look at the source of your growth, and not to the mysterious process of the Spirit within you. Christ is to you grace, righteousness, wisdom, strength, without your knowing exactly what passes in your heart. For My grace works in

a hidden way—you can understand the working of grace, as little as you can explain how the rain makes the earth fruitful. Rest assured, that My word shall bring forth in you fruits of righteousness. You can do nothing but use my word as a word of life, and be guided by the Spirit of repentance and faith."

3. What is the spiritual man's relation to the world? Without any effort or exertion of his own, as a sudden, perfect, accomplished fact, the cross of Christ has crucified the believer to the world, and the world to him. (Gal. vi. 16.) When we come to Christ crucified, such a change takes place in our heart, that the world, formerly so beautiful and attractive in our eyes, and rooted in our affections, appears to us now dead, or at least dying, fading away, developing only the corruption which is in it. Is it not so? Oh, then, come again to Jesus, and say:—

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the cross of Christ my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.
His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er His body on the tree;
Then am I dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

There are many admirers of the cross, many who are willing to be comforted and soothed by Christ's sufferings and death, and yet they may be enemies of the cross of Christ; they may be one in spirit with the age, the evil world that crucified Him. Minding earthly things, they can never know the power or the sweetness of Christ crucified. Believer,

rise from the disciple-stage, which savoureth not the things that be of God, to the spiritual, pentecostal condition. For as much as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind. (Compare Peter in Matt. xvi. 22, 23, and 1 Peter iv. 1.)

4. Lastly, the Spirit is the Spirit of hope and glory. By Him we wait for the coming of the Lord, when we also shall appear with Him in glory; and death loses its terror, as it has lost its sting. The body is the inviolable temple of the Holy Spirit. We know that the Holy Spirit watches over the bodies of the saints till the resurrection; it is the Spirit, who shall also quicken our mortal bodies.* Flesh and blood cannot inherit the

* There is no opposition between body and spirit; Christ has a body now, and yet He is Spirit; His *body* also is spiritual, full of glory, light and power. There are spirits without bodies, and some of them are devils. "Carnal" is often confounded with bodily. Views are sometimes suspected as "carnal," which are Scriptural and spiritual. "The end of all God's ways is embodiment" is a fruitful saying of Ötinger. God prepares a body for Christ. There is a place of glory for the glorified; there is an outward and visible kingdom yet to appear, ushered in by signs and wonders, even as there is a spiritual and invisible kingdom, which cometh not with observation. The two kingdoms are one. There must also be a region of darkness, terror, torment, corresponding with the inward state of ungodliness and self-centred isolation. Scripture is easily understood by children and the simple, who take hold of the real in the figurative; and it is, after all, safer to take something that is figurative to be real, than to explain what is real as figure. We know what pseudo-spiritualism has done in the Church; how, by emancipating the "spirit" from the "Jewish garment," men have departed from the truth.

kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. But Christ by His Spirit shall change our bodies of sin and of weakness. Then shall we bear the image of the heavenly, the Second Man, the Lord from Heaven, then shall we be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, and enter into the joy of our Lord. Then shall we be "spiritual," the children of the resurrection, body, soul and spirit, redeemed by Christ, renewed and glorified by the Holy Ghost; in union with Christ the Lord, the quickening Spirit, we shall glorify the Father for ever and ever.

Meanwhile, this is the time of warfare, trial, patience, humility; the time of David, and not of Solomon; the time of service and suffering. Remember Christ crucified. Let us not be carnal and walk as men (1 Cor. iii. 3), but let us be spiritual, and walk in Christ's love. Amen.

LECTURE VIII.

SPIRITUAL PREACHING OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—1 Cor. ii. 1—5.

Pentecost was the birthday of spiritual Gospel preaching. When Christ sent down the Holy Ghost from Heaven, then were fulfilled and consummated the wonderful salvation-works of God. The gift of the Spirit is the end of Christ's first advent, and the fulfilment of the Father's promise. It is the source and commencement of the new testimony of reconciliation. Now the whole counsel of God is revealed; Christ is glorified, and the full and final message of God

to mankind can be declared. And as the message is complete, so the Holy Ghost gives new light and utterance to the chosen witnesses of Christ.

It is true, that from the beginning of the world God hath spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, proclaimed the coming of the Lord. Noah was a preacher of righteousness. Abraham spoke not merely to his household, but to the people among whom he dwelt, of the God in whom he believed. Moses declared unto Israel the name and ways of Jehovah; and of the spirit of Moses was given unto the seventy elders, that they prophesied. From Samuel, to whom the word of the Lord came at Shiloh, to Isaiah, who spoke comfort to the heart of Jerusalem, from Elijah to John the Baptist, there were prophets who spoke in the name of God. The last and greatest witness preached repentance and faith, law and Gospel, Christ the Judge and Christ the Lamb; he pointed to the Lord from Heaven, who would baptize with the Holy Ghost. But he that is least in the new dispensation is greater than the Baptist. What before was fragmentary, is now collected and summed up in unity; what before was future is now accomplished; there is no longer obscurity, the veil is rent, the true light now shineth. How simple is now the divine message. The name of God is revealed as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; we preach peace by Jesus, who died on the cross. All predictions of the old Covenant are summed up in the single expression

"The Lamb on the Throne." Nothing can exceed the simplicity, transparency and brevity of the Gospel message.

The full revelation of the Gospel is the starting-point of a new dispensation. In Israel, under the Economy of Law, there was a Priesthood. God had chosen a people, and He appointed the way in which the Covenant-relations between Him and them were to be maintained. There was no ministry to mankind; no messengers to go forth and preach to fallen men, as such, repentance and the remission of sins. The prophets, it is true, were precursors of the Gospel ministry; sent in grace by Him whose promise was before the Law, but they do not belong strictly to the Economy under which Israel lived. The prophetic office, distinct from the priesthood, and given by the Spirit according to His will to chosen men from all tribes and positions, was a constant testimony of the new dispensation, of the Heavenly Sanctuary, of which Tabernacle and Temple were only shadows. The prophets are an anticipation of the Gospel ministry. Another anticipation of the world-wide Gospel is in the view, given in the book of Proverbs, of the Eternal Wisdom which speaks unto all men, bringing unto them life and peace. But in the fulness of time, Christ came to seek and to save that which is lost; to die not merely for the Nation, but to gather all the children of God scattered abroad. In Him the love of the Father was revealed, seeking men to worship Him in spirit and in

truth. The world, beloved of God, is the scene of His mission. He is a fisher of men, gaining them out of the troubled and perilous sea into His net. And He sends forth His disciples to preach the good tidings to all nations, to every creature, to declare the eternal, free, and infinite love of God which, in the crucified Saviour, reconciled the world to Himself. Such a commission had never been given before; so deep and full, declaring grace and glory to the chief of sinners; so free and comprehensive, embracing all nations and tribes; so solemn and awful, announcing exclusion from the everlasting kingdom and blessedness to all who reject it.

But as the commission transcends all former divine dealings with men, so the messengers or ministers of Christ differ from priests and prophets of the old dispensation. Their peculiarity is simply this, that they are sent by the God-man Jesus Christ and endowed with the Spirit, by whom they are one with the exalted Head. The ministry of Christ Himself explains to us the peculiar character of our ministry. God always spoke to man in a human way through men, in human language and in adaptation to our limited capacity. But in Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, we hear the divine word in human language, as it was never heard before. Here the Divine and Human are perfectly united. Truth, absolute, all-sided, infinite, is uttered by pure lips, out of a tender and loving human heart, and in human modes of thought and expression, born out of earthly scenes and experiences. Never man

spake as this Man: yet as man He spake; grace was poured into the lips of the Son of Man. The Son of God spoke in the form of a servant; He, by whom all things are created, spoke as the mouth of creation, in parables; He, who is the Lord and Spirit of Scripture, spoke as one who knew the sacred letters, and who had been instructed by the written word. Human sorrow, sympathy, and indignation, anxiety and joy were His, in perfect holiness and love, even as, mixed with sinful weakness, they are felt by every human teacher.

Human as his teaching was, it was full of divine power. He spoke what He knew and had seen of the Father and of heavenly things. He had authority, and his words were spirit and life. The word which he uttered shall judge them that heard it; for God spake in and by Him, and whoso rejecteth the Son rejecteth the Father also. And yet the ministry of Christ on earth was only preparatory, because the Spirit was not yet given. Christ enters on the spiritual ministry by his Apostles, and not in His own person; on the day of Pentecost, and not in the days of his flesh. It is *His* ministry; Christ Himself speaks in us, we are his ambassadors, beseeching men in Christ's stead; the Spirit of Christ as the Spirit of faith, is the source of our witnessing. The love which constrains the ministers of the Gospel is the love of Christ, who is still the friend of sinners; our sorrow for perishing souls; our affection and parental anxiety for the newly-born disciples; our joy and thankfulness for the sheep that

are brought to the fold—all come from the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church. He is the Bishop of souls, the elder brother, the Shepherd, the Evangelist; in Him all the Gospel ministry has its present living source. Our union with the God-man is the characteristic peculiarity of the New Testament ministry.

And Christ's ministry is a ministry of the *Word.* By the Word souls are quickened, instructed, rebuked, comforted, and sanctified. He has not sent us to baptize, but to preach. He has intrusted to us no ceremonies, but the mysteries of the kingdom, the doctrine of godliness. He has invested us with no weapons, dignities and powers, but He gives us the sword of the Spirit, the Word which is living and powerful.

Hence, when the Apostle Peter describes the work of the ministry, he says: "We shall give ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word." Has he forgotten the last solemn commission of the risen Saviour, to baptize in the Holy Name? or the institution of the Lord's Supper? No, doubtless, as is evident from the Acts of the Apostles. But there is no ministry of the Sacraments; only a ministry of the Word. To baptize and to preside at the celebration of the Supper requires no special position or call in the Church. The ministry is to declare and apply the Word in the spirit of priestly love, patience, and intercession.

Among all the various gifts of Christ to the Church, which the Apostle Paul enumerates, he never once mentions the word priest. He speaks of

apostles, evangelists, prophets, shepherds, and teachers. Neither he nor any other Apostle calls the ministers of the Word by a title which belongs to all the saints. Peter writes to all believers: You are a royal priesthood; and the Apostle John declares, that all whom Jesus loved and washed in His blood are priests unto God.*

But while we assert the priestly dignity of all believers, we magnify the Apostolic office of the ministry, instituted by Christ Himself, who called, instructed, and ordained by the Holy Ghost its first representatives. He maintains it for the edification of the Church and the ingathering of the elect to the end of this dispensation; He has given to it special directions and commands, special promises and warnings. Blessed are we if we are found faithful, and blessed is the congregation of whom the watchers can give account with joy; but it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah on that day, than for the despisers of the Gospel ministry.

The Christ-ministry is in the Spirit. Of old, holy men spake as they were moved by the Spirit of God. But the Spirit came upon them and did not dwell in them. The message they delivered, though

* The Apostles would have thought it as unnecessary to call a minister a Christian, or believer, or saint, as to call him a priest. He must be a believer or priest, in order to be a minister. Ministers of the Word are shepherds and teachers; so Theophylact writes: "Est doctrina virtus et character Episcopi;" and Hilary: "Summa omnium virtutum Episcopalium est scientia et doctrina."

it filled them with awe and joy, yet was a message external to them, and they had to enquire what was signified in it. Christ gives the Spirit as an indwelling Spirit. We preach out of experience, in union with Christ, out of the treasure of the heart, in which Christ has His abode. The inspiration of the Apostolic writings possesses this peculiarity as contrasted with the Old Testament prophets, who deliver their message as an objective document: "Thus saith the Lord."* But now the Spirit and the Bride, the Spirit and the ministers of the Spirit, are one voice, preaching Christ.

The Word of God is the centre of our Church-meetings. We do not underrate the importance and the blessedness of worship. But the connection between worship and doctrine or teaching, is very intimate. "Let the Word of Christ dwell among you richly, *teaching and admonishing* one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." The Reformers had a true Scriptural instinct in the importance they attached to the *Preaching of the Word* in our meetings. The opposite tendency, so prevalent now in very diverse circles, has deep reasons, which call forth earnest thought and self-examination.

The Apostle Paul was eminently a New Testament minister, not of the letter that killeth, but of the Spirit that quickeneth. Called by Christ, sent to Gentiles and Jews, He declared the everlasting

* Compare my remarks in "Christ and the Scriptures," on the Book of the Church, chap. vi.

Gospel of grace and life, he preached in the Spirit, and how abundant was the harvest of his labours. How numerous were his children in the Gospel, to how many congregations could he say: As a wise master builder I have laid the foundation.

He speaks often of his ministry, for it is of importance to the Church to know the real object, character and difficulties of the ministry, that they may receive the gift of Christ with thankfulness, in faith and holy fear, helping by prayer and spiritual co-operation. Let us look at the Apostle's description of his ministry at Corinth.

"I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and much trembling." When the Apostle left Athens, he was in heaviness and great depression of spirit.* He who exhorted the Christians: "Rejoice alway," possessed himself the joy of the Lord. Yet though always rejoicing, he was sorrowful; and though at peace with God, he was in fear and trembling. We know how much the unbelief of Israel weighed on his loving heart. He was comforted in his spirit, knowing that God made the unbelief of Israel the occasion of greater blessing to the world, and that finally Israel also would be saved. Yet he could not but feel continual heaviness and sorrow of heart on account of his brethren. And this sorrow was a feeling in which he had communion with Christ.† His experience in Athens, the highest representative of heathenism, had been painful: and felt all the more so by him, who sought in the Gentiles

* Compare 1 Thess. iii. † Rom. ix. 1-3.

consolation for the rejection of Israel. Some have supposed, that the Apostle noticed how little fruit his preaching produced at Athens, where he had testified with consummate skill and adaptation in wisdom and excellency of speech, and that therefore he determined, at the beginning of his ministry at Corinth, to preach Christ crucified in all simplicity. Without examining this view, in which there seems some truth, it is evident that the Apostle felt as a great and heavy burden the task which the Lord had given him. Heathenism was a mighty mountain,* and to remove it human *weakness* was needed. Not power, not strength, self-confidence and courage, but weakness, fear, and trembling. Faith removes mountains; and faith is only possessed by the weak. The Apostle experienced in Corinth: "When I am weak, then am I strong."

What light, clear and bright, comforting and sweet, came to him from the very message which he delivered: "Christ crucified!" Why need He be disheartened and dismayed? why need his weakness, fear and trembling, interfere with the most abundant success, when God Himself shows His wisdom and power, in that which the world regards as foolishness and weakness? The foolishness of God is wiser than man, and the weakness of God stronger than

* The barren fig-tree was a symbol of Israel; the great and strong mountain, of the power of Heathenism. Judgment came on the former, while through the faith of the Apostles the latter was removed wherever they preached the Gospel.

man. "Weakness of God!" We read the expression quickly and easily. But when Paul had *invented* this strange paradox, when his spirit, grasping with deep self-application the mystery of the cross, had at last uttered the words: divine weakness, he had gained the victory; the sweet light of Christ's resurrection-power had brought all-sufficient consolation and hope. He had died and he was alive again.*

Are not all God's ministers men of weakness, fear and trembling? Most of all those in whom greatest power and blessing are manifested. Do they not shrink from the great work like Moses, and feel like Jeremiah: "O Lord, I am but a child?" Is not the burden so overwhelming to them, that like Luther they say with great anguish: "It is not my cause but thy own; I would fain have quiet days, but it is thy cause. Where art thou, oh my God? I am ready to offer my life, patient as a lamb. For it is thy cause and I would not be separated from Thee."† Again, are not the servants of God, who show the greatest fearlessness and courage, the greatest boldness and intrepidity, who most sternly rebuke sin

* Beside the conflict and temptation which the minister of Christ has in common with all believers, there are special soul trials and struggles into which many, if not all Gospel preachers are brought. Compare 2 Cor. *passim*, specially iv., v., and xii. Luther speaks very fully of the "tentatio," which, with prayer and meditation, constitutes the three elements in the training of a minister. The result is our always "dying, yet behold we believe," the "cor meum velut mactatum" as Calvin says..

† Luther's prayer at Worms, overheard by a friend.

and announce judgment, men of weakness, tenderness and affection? Was not Jeremiah, sent to root out and to pull down and to destroy, a man of most exquisite sensibility, a man of love and tears? Did not Elijah, after act of greatest courage and zeal, sink into despondency? Was not John the Baptist the most self-forgetful and affectionate friend of the Bridegroom? And who, like the beloved disciple, separates so sternly and severely world and Church, darkness and light, God and Satan?

Or, do not the preachers of grace, who dwell most on the all-sufficient work of Christ and on our perfect acceptance in Him, experience most painfully the need of a Saviour, the power of sin, the condemnation of the law, the accusation of Satan? Who was a greater and more joyous Gospel preacher than Luther, yet who had such constant, deep, and overwhelming experience of the inner struggle?—who felt more profoundly than he, what it is to come daily as a lost sinner to Christ crucified? We have the treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency may be of God. We preach not from a pedestal of undisturbed quiet and perfect attainment, but knowing what it is to cry out of the depths, we proclaim the mercy of God; knowing the misery and helplessness of sinful man, we extol the abounding grace of God, and the resurrection-power, which in Christ Jesus is given unto those, who have the sentence of death in themselves.

And in all this weakness we not merely testify, but as the messengers of God, in His name and by

His authority, constrained by his love and identified with His compassion, we exhort and beseech all men, setting before them life and death, and praying them in Christ's stead, "be ye reconciled to God."

Having considered the character of the Gospel ministry, let us consider its METHOD. The Apostle describes the method negatively, "not with enticing words of man's wisdom," and, again, "not with excellency of speech or of wisdom," and positively "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

1. We are sent to preach Christ according to the Scriptures. This commission was given us by the risen Saviour. First by His example, for He opened the understanding of the Apostles that they might understand the Scriptures; He began at Moses and all the prophets, and expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things "concerning Himself." And then by precept. For He said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, that repentance and remission of sins should be granted in His name;" that is, thus it was written and thus it happened, and thus it must be preached.* Jesus is the Christ; and Christ crucified is Christ indeed; this is the sum and substance of our message; but if we wish to preach Christ fully according to the Scriptures, we must declare the "whole counsel of God." Can we preach that Jesus is the Christ without explaining what is the meaning of the promise of Messiah?

* Luke xxiv. 44-48.

And does not this involve the history of the old covenant? Can we show the efficacy of the atonement without explaining the nature of sin and guilt, the holiness and justice of God, the perfection of the law, and the typical sacrifices appointed by God? Is it not necessary to know the history of creation and of the fall to understand Christ as the second Adam? The Scripture is one; it cannot be broken; it is profitable throughout; it leads everywhere to Christ. The doctrine of Christ embraces history and prophecy; it shows us what to believe, love, and hope for; the gospel is doctrine, history, prophecy, exhortation; all its history is doctrinal, all its doctrine is practical; it possesses fulness and unity; in it, as in everything spiritual, every part is a whole, and the whole is in every part. The Gospel is a doctrine for man and human life, and co-extensive with all relationships, duties, and trials of our earthly pilgrimage. It takes cognisance, also, of all the root-forms of sin and error in the individual and in mankind, and hence comes into contact with everything in this world; judging it with perfect clearness and absolute authority. As the Scripture is the book for man and for the world; for all that is in man, and for all generations of our race, and as Christ is to be preached according to the Scripture, the preaching of Christ possesses a breadth as well as a depth, a variety and universality as well as a concentration, which all preachers that have appeared have not fully comprehended, still less actually set forth.

Is it possible for a preacher, to have too much knowledge or culture, or too great power of reasoning or imagination, in order to preach the Gospel as it ought, as it might be preached? What knowledge or gift but may find here most ample, delightful, and profitable exercise? All the gold and silver may be brought to this service. Whether it be knowledge of nature, or history, or of the human mind, of the world around or the world within us, Christ is Lord of all; He rules over every department of the universe of God; He is the Centre and the Light of the world; in Him, even as the Lamb that was slain, is the solution of every problem.

And yet does the Apostle say, "I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, and not with the enticing words of human wisdom."

He spoke in the previous chapter of the "foolishness of preaching." We misunderstand the force of this expression, if we see in it a confession of his own weakness, as if he applied it only or specially to his way of declaring the Gospel. Whoever proclaims the Gospel, though Christ is preached by the eloquent lips of an Apollos, the preaching of the Gospel is foolishness.* It is God's wisdom, but it appears in the form of a servant; even as the Son of God came, and men saw no beauty in Him, or comeliness, why they should desire Him. For the Gospel is a declaration, not an argument. We announce the great deeds of God, as Peter did on the day of Pentecost; he being filled with the Spirit

* Steinmeyer, Fest. Predigten xiv.

declared the wonderful salvation works of God. Christ crucified, Christ raised, Christ sending forth the Spirit. These facts he preached also to Cornelius; these facts Paul preached everywhere. "Christ died for our sins and rose again," this was what he delivered unto the Corinthians and all the congregations he planted. The Apostles told the History—and to prove it, they explained the History *as fulfilment of the Scriptures.* Peter's sermon is nothing else but the narrative, the fact asserted, then the narrative declared as fulfilment of prophecy. Nothing else, nothing more. He states, announces, declares. What can be simpler than to tell a narrative? This is the simplest form of instruction, which we adopt with little children. Peter and the Apostles do not prop up their testimony with man's reasoning, they only show that what has happened, has happened according to Scripture. Is not this foolishness of preaching? Is not this reasoning in a circle? But by this foolishness of preaching it pleases God to save them that believe.

The power of the Gospel is in the Gospel itself, not in our proofs and commendations. If wise men believe it—and, though not many, there are always some wise men chosen of God—(1 Cor. i. 26)—it is because they are willing to give up their wisdom and to become fools. The greatest philosopher and the most uncultured peasant are brought to Christ in the same way, they believe the foolishness of preaching, the great and wonderful works of God: Christ came, died, and rose again!

It is with wisdom as with righteousness. Israel sought righteousness by the works of the Law, but did not attain it. God *gives* righteousness. Behold, it descends from Heaven! Perfect, spotless, beautiful, glorious:

> "Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness,
> My beauty are, and glorious dress."

It alights, and the woman who was a sinner, Zaccheus, the thief on the cross, are in a moment clothed with the best robe. Behold, the believing sinner! He toils not, he spins not, but God clothes him; and as Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of the lilies, so the mightiest king of self-made piety and works cannot be compared with the least of Christ's justified children. Do we undervalue good works? Nay, the Apostle Paul, who preached grace more clearly than any other, tells us that the purpose of grace is that we should be *zealots* of good works.* But *righteousness* is the gift of God.

In like manner, what the Greeks sought was *wisdom*. Did they attain it? The wisest among men, Socrates, was wise because he knew his ignorance. God has *sent* wisdom. As the self-righteous are hurt and offended when they hear of a perfect righteousness descending from Heaven to the vilest and making him righteous in a moment, the philosophers object to receive, in a moment, wisdom from above, simple, clear, round and whole, a perfect thing, which every child can understand: even Christ

* Titus ii. 14.

crucified. But as the saved by grace are to be zealots of good works, so let the enlightened by grace be zealots of wisdom.

And now the solution of what appeared contradictory is evident. The Gospel must be *preached*,* that is, asserted and declared. The preacher must trust in nothing else but the power of the Spirit blessing and applying the message. He must remember, that in the facts he announces, God Himself speaks directly to the conscience and heart of man, alike to the ignorant and to the princes of intellect. His great and his only care is to deliver the message. If human reasoning, however cogent, and illustrations, however beautiful, and eloquence however fascinating, obscure and overlay, either to the preacher or to the hearer, the simplicity of the Gospel facts, then better were it a thousand times that in the most illiterate and rude speech of the weakest believer the cross of Christ should be set forth; for it pleases God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Not them that admire and enjoy, and are convinced by argument, and conciliated by seeing learning and taste allied to the proclamations of truth, but them who by faith receive the divine message.

But if Christ crucified is Alpha and Omega, sum and substance, source and aim, light and joy of the preacher, and he brings Him and Him only before the eyes of men, then all gifts of nature and all treasures of knowledge will be made subservient to the great end. Christ came, not to destroy but to

* Literally heralded.

fulfil. He is Lord of creation as well as of redemption. And as Christ remains our only righteousness, though we become zealots of good works, so Christ remains all our widom, though we possess ever so high mental gifts and attainments; and as we have always to be on our guard lest we trust in and look to our works instead of Christ only; so must we always determine not to come with excellency of speech and of wisdom, but to know nothing save Christ and Him crucified.

Yet another point must be added to guard and modify, what I have said. The preaching of the Gospel, however legitimately allied to natural gifts and mental acquirements, must always retain the mark of crucifixion. It does not become us to be orators. There is an element in human eloquence which is not according to the Gospel of Christ crucified. There is a consciousness of power, of influence, of *suada*, which is not according to the Gospel. *We* do not wish to influence, move, soften, terrify, mould; we look to God, that He, by making His truth, His glorious and loving message come into contact with the heart, may draw men unto Himself. Not that we do not feel love and anxiety; not that we have no special object in view which we desire to attain; but that desired and conscious power of influencing people by the force or pathos of eloquence, which orators possess and strive after, and which the world admits in them, we neither covet nor aim at. We do not wish to sway an audience as the great orators of the world, keep-

ing them for the moment, at least, under a spell of enchantment, their minds and wills under a potent fascination. No, God is to hold you and sway you, fill you with awe, terror, contrition, love, joy, and hope; for He alone, the blessed Lord, can draw irresistibly, and yet give the heart perfect liberty. He makes *willing* in the day of His power; He sets you free when He enchains you; He creates in you a perfectly free individuality when His sweet love makes you its bondsman.

And if a Chrysostom or a Whitefield possessed and used this worldly eloquence, I, for one, am bold enough to say: It lessened their power, it weakened, it tarnished the brightness of their true Light. When Whitefield, on one occasion, described the miserable condition of a blind beggar on a dangerous road, on a dark night, sightless, friendless, deserted even by his dog, and about to take that fatal step which would have hurled him down the precipice to certain destruction, when he spoke with such graphic power and vividness that the whole audience of the most cultivated, refined minds were kept in breathless silence, and Lord Chesterfield actually made a rush forward to save the poor old man; this was a marvellous triumph of eloquence, but was any one converted by it? What different power was in his simplest declaration of the curse which rests on every sinner, and of the blessing which from a crucified Saviour, is ready to descend on the guiltiest, when the Spirit applied it to the hearts of the Kingsdown colliers, and tears

made furrows in their begrimed cheeks, and careless and profligate men were changed into believers and saints. Preaching is of grace, not of nature, *still less of art;* it is God's power and not man's. "Paul was not eloquent (in the world's sense of the word) and greater than Apollos, so was Moses greater than Aaron."*

Eloquent was Paul indeed, if by eloquence you understand earnest simplicity, the outspeaking of love and knowledge and experience, which God gives; yet the world that heard him said: "He was rude of speech."

2. The Apostolic preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. For Paul preached the Word of God. This is more than preaching according to the Scriptures. Even without the Spirit men may preach according to the Scriptures; yet such preaching may proceed from a dead self-acquired knowledge, and mere natural zeal; it may be without divine authority, like "the burden of the Lord," or exposition of texts and repetition of divine truth, which Jeremiah describes in the false prophets, who prophesied though they were not sent of God.†

* Adolph Monod, (St. Paul, iv. discourse,) who takes substantially the same view "Paul was a man of great eloquence in the most elevated sense of the word, but not a great orator in the popular acceptation of this title."

† Read the very emphatic and remarkable passage, Jeremiah xxiii. 16—40. There is a text-preaching, which is not "Word of God preaching." There is such a thing as stealing "The Lord's words" (verse 30) from human authority and human sources, instead of receiving it from him who alone has the right

Such preaching possesses no regenerating power, it is not seed of divine life. The promise is only to the Word which goeth forth out of God's mouth. He who preaches the Word of God, receives it first himself by the Spirit of God; by repentance and faith he makes it his own, the Word dwells in him. It is Heaven high above him, it condemns and rebukes him, it deepens his conviction of sin, it shows him how little he has yet attained; but still it is his; he believes it, he grasps and cherishes it; he eats the Word, and the Word becomes his very life-blood, the husbandman himself partaketh first of the fruit. Then he receives this Word of God, which is now his, as a special message, for the special occasion before him, and he determines to deliver it unto men, and with utterance asked for and given, he speaks. By such preaching cometh faith. Faith is due only to God's Word. "The Word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth," said the woman to Elijah, and this is the response of the quickened conscience to spiritual preaching. The Holy Ghost, who testifies of Christ in the Scriptures, preaches Christ according to the Scriptures, by the living witnesses. Preaching is more than an exposition of Scripture; it is a *reproduction of Scripture.* It is

and power of sending forth the quickening and saving message (verse 22). When a minister of the Gospel reads such a passage, his heart's prayer is :—

"Oh, for a closer walk with God !"

All homiletics and pastoral theology are summed up in this petition.

the Word of God, and it is inspired, though not as the Scriptures, in which there is no admixture of sin and error, and which remain always the standard by which even Apostolic preaching is judged (Acts xvii. 11). But the Gospel is preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven (1 Pet. i. 12 and 25), and this preaching is called in Scripture "Word of God." The words of Christ in us are Spirit; they bring light, they produce faith. And this is demonstration in the strictest and fullest sense of the word. Christ is seen, and Christ is received by faith; the things of God are understood, and they are appropriated. What the preacher describes, the Holy Ghost reveals and bestows upon the hearer. Christ crucified may be seen by the reason and imagination as a picture; there is no reality, no life, it is as "a painted ship on a painted ocean;" but when spiritual preaching is received, Christ crucified is seen by the heart as a living and loving Saviour; we see and we possess. The Spirit thus unites preacher and hearer in real beholding, and actual possession of the salvation of God.

Oh, what a solemn and blessed thing is spiritual preaching! The message is divine, the messenger must receive it fresh and direct from God. He can, he will receive it, and most truly, when he is conscious of his want of earnestness, of his weakness, of his sinfulness; when his soul cleaveth unto the dust, and the spirit cries: Quicken me! The congregation of believers, including the earnest and sincere seekers (Acts x. 33) are present before God, in the

spirit of prayer, to hear all things that are commanded the preacher of God. The Holy Ghost descends. He glorifies Christ. Words, in which many can see no force and no beauty, possess an enlightening, quickening, comforting power; because they come from and with the Spirit; because they are utterances of the eternal Word of God.

When the arm of the Lord is revealed, when preaching is in demonstration of Spirit and of power, the grand result is *Faith.* It is *the* result of preaching. Faith, and nothing else. Nothing else can be done with the Word of God; we either reject and lose it, or believe and possess it. From the first moment of spiritual life to the last breath of the Christian pilgrim, from the simplest form of speech, which infant lips can utter, to the greatest work of Apostolic wisdom and zeal, faith in the Word is all. By faith we are saved, by faith we draw near to God, by faith we love Jesus whom we have not seen, by faith we overcome the world, by faith we offer up Isaac, our only son, by faith we remove mountains, by faith we obey and glorify God.

You have but one thing to pray for me, that in the Spirit I may preach the Word of God. I have but one thing to pray for myself and you, that we may *believe* the Word.

And the Word is Christ crucified. Do we believe the Word, "Christ crucified," when we have any confidence in the flesh, and do not rejoice in Christ Jesus? when we do not behold God as our Father, loving us with the love with which He loved His

Son? Do we believe the Word, "Christ crucified," when we do not reckon ourselves severed from sin, which God condemned in the flesh? when we do not remember that our old man has been crucified with Him, that henceforth we should not serve sin? Do we believe "Christ crucified" when we doubt that as in Christ we have pardon of all sins, so we have in Him, likewise, strength to resist and overcome all evil, and to walk in newness of life? Do we believe in "Christ crucified" when we are alive to the spirit, the pleasures, the love of the world, and when the world can find in us a life responsive to its spirit and life, when the cross of Christ has not crucified us to the world and the world to us? Do we believe in "Christ crucified" when we seek our own honour? when we do not see our mission in this world, to be even as Christ was, meek and lowly in heart, patient and forgiving, ministering unto others, washing the disciples' feet, and bearing and enduring all things for all men? And do we believe in "Christ crucified" if we are not upheld and animated by the hope of glory, the joy that is set before us?

Oh, that it may be given unto us, preacher and hearer, to receive by faith continually Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

"Oh, come to the Saviour, whose arms are extended,
To fold His dear children in closest embrace!
Oh, come, for your exile will shortly be ended,
And Jesus will show you His beautiful face!"

Come to Christ crucified! And you, who have

come, abide in Him! How touching, how sweet, how deep are the words of the Saviour, which on that last night before His death on the cross He spake to His disciples: "Abide in Me!" And though you have to follow me in suffering, in affliction, and in daily dying, abide in Me! Abide in Christ crucified, and yours, also, will be the glory; for Christ crucified is Lord of all, and we are joint heirs with Him, *if so be that we suffer with Him, that we be also glorified together.* Amen.

I.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

MAN's reason may behold the cross and weep,
And like Jerus'lem's daughters may lament,
Be sooth'd by her own sorrow, and yet sleep
In sin, the heart ne'er quickened and ne'er rent.

Be *my* desire, the fellowship to know
Of suffering with my Lord, the Crucified;
Into the likeness of His death to grow,
And live the life of faith in Him, who died.

The cross of Christ, the mystery revealed,
Brings peace and sorrow, death and life to me;
The world is crucified, and I am sealed
An heir of God, from sin and fear set free.

II.*

"BY MY SPIRIT."

Thy Spirit is above our methods and our ways,
He like a mighty wind drives earth-born clouds away;
Whene'er it pleases Him He sends the brightest rays,
And doubt's dark night He changeth into peaceful day.
What we would fain combine by our short-sighted skill,
He scatters east and west, He gives to south and north;
What we would fain subject to our control and will,
Free as the mountain air His sovereign hand sends forth.
What men deem much or all is nothing in Thy sight,
What nothing is to man, thou lovest dearly, Lord;
The pow'r of human speech brings neither peace nor light,
The heart is drawn alone by Thine own mighty word.
Thou kindlest in my soul the light of truth divine;
The hidden treasure now is seen, and it is mine.

* Free translations from the German of Gottfried Arnold.

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